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# THE ITINERANT.

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THE  
ITINERANT,  
OR  
MEMOIRS OF AN ACTOR.

BY S. W. RYLEY.

*Five*  
IN ~~TWO~~ VOLUMES.  
*3 vols. published since*

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"The world's a stage,  
"And all the men, and women, merely players;  
"They have their exits, and their entrances;  
"And one man, in his time, plays many parts."

SHAKESPEARE.

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VOL. I.

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PUBLISHED AND SOLD BY INSKEEP & BRADFORD,  
*New-York.*

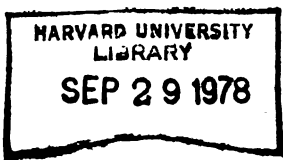
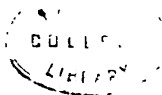
AND WILLIAM M'ILHENNEY,  
*Boston.*

*J. & A. T. Humphreys, Printers, Philadelphia.*  
1810.

~~IP 984~~

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-11020448



TO  
WILLIAM ROSCOE, ESQUIRE.

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SIR,

*IT is difficult to form a mode of address that may convey sentiments of high respect, and not involve the appearance of flattery.*

*Without the honour of being known to you, with no other excuse for my temerity, than the admiration your literary, political, moral, and domestic character naturally excite, I have presumed without permission, to dedicate the following sheets to you.*

*If they should prove an amusement, in your moments of relaxation, I shall be amply gratified in having added my mile towards the entertainment of one, whose study, through life, has been to promote the knowledge, the improvement, and the happiness of others.*

*I have the honour to be, with sentiments of profound respect,*

*SIR,*

*Your most obedient,*

*And very faithful servant,*

**S. W. RILEY.**



## PREFACE.

---

*WHEN the journal from which I have drawn up the following Memoir, was first penned, the writer had not the most distant idea that it would ever be made public ; but all-powerful time, that brings about wonderful revolutions, has rendered that an object of gain, which commenced as an amusement, in hours of ease and affluence.*

*Those who have known the hero, will easily discern that the name is a fictitious one, and that, though the incidents are founded on facts, fancy has been exercised in the embellishments. Should it afford amusement, without injuring the morals—should it be the means of awakening a sentiment of pity for suffering humanity, it will answer the intention of*

THE AUTHOR.



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Alexander acted in camps, and made a great noise; I have acted in barns, and made a great noise too. Alexander murdered Clytus—I have murdered Shakespeare. Thus far we are equally intitled to a distinguished place in history.

Reader! think not I mean to take up thy time with a useless account of my birth and parentage. What my father and mother did, previous to my entrance into the world, you have nothing to do with; suffice it then to say—at the age of five years I found myself the only child of Samuel Romney, a wholesale grocer in St. James's Market.

My mother dreamt—Dreamt! dont be alarmed; I won't sleep over the business; I say—or rather, my mother said, she dreamt, the night I was born, that she was brought to bed of a squib! Whether there is any similitude between this dream and the adventures of my life, will be seen in the following sheets.

Another childish anecdote—In my nurse's arms I was carried to dine with my mother at the parson's house. A *tythe pig* was provided, and nurse was determined to try, by an infallible rule, whether master was designed for the *Church*. Accordingly, the pig's tail was put into my mouth—of animal food the first I had tasted; but through the servants' neglect—or perhaps, my fondness for the meat—the tail slipped down my throat, and would undoubtedly have produced very serious consequences, had not a surgeon been sent for immediately.

The vicar, to make amends, as he said, gave me, at parting, a purse containing a variety of small silver coins; but as a disregard of money has ever been a leading trait in my character, I began to exercise this talent early in life; for, crossing the Thames on our return, nurse permitted me to lean over the boat, when I very deliberately took my purse by the wrong end, and emptied its contents into the river. A

# THE ITINERANT.

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## CHAPTER I.

### MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

---

"If a man do not erect in this age his own Tomb ere he dies, he shall live no longer in monuments, than the bells ring, and the widow weeps."  
SHAKESPEARE.

---

THE memoirs of Heroes, whether ancient or modern, seldom make their appearance during the lives of the parties ; but, as such gentlemen have generally performed very great and good, or little and bad actions, to render them worthy record, there is a chance of their names outliving their burial. A biographer, in that case, may find it worth his while to paint their characters in sombre or bright colours, as interest or partiality lead. But as there is small probability of any one turning historian for me, I am determined to do it for myself ; and why should I not ? 'Tis true, I am no hero now ; but I have been, aye, and made as much noise as the loudest of them.

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VOL. I.

B



some degree, to all boys, and as they would prove uninteresting to the major part of my readers; I shall omit them. At length, however, we got to such a degree of assurance, that no orchard could withstand us; every pear and apple tree in the vicinity bore testimony of our prowess. In one of these expeditions, after climbing to an amazing height, the boughs gave way—down I tumbled—and a broken arm was the consequence. In this miserable condition I was found by the owner of the garden, and carried home to my mother. Doatingly fond! her anxiety was beyond expression. The gardener, in vain, pleaded his loss; her whole attention was taken up in the care of me. But, after the surgeon had set my arm, and things bore an hopeful appearance, she satisfied the man, and—I shall never forget it—spoke to me as follows:—

‘Do you know, my son, what you have been doing?—that you have, at this early period of life, broken a commandment of God....*Thou shalt not steal?* It has pleased HIM to give you this timely warning, which, I hope, will make a lasting impression on your mind. Had you been permitted to go on, the gallows might have put a period to your wickedness, and brought me with sorrow to the grave! I bless God, that you are yet alive, and have it in your power to reform; as a first step towards which, I will take you from this school, and from your idle companions; for I find, of a truth, that ‘evil communications corrupt good manners.’

The pain of my arm, joined to my mother’s serious admonition, had such an immediate effect on my feelings, that I was nearly convulsed. The idea of stealing sunk deep; I had no notion that boxing (as we termed it) a few apples, could deserve such an appellation. However, it had this good effect—I was brought to my senses, and repentance followed.

Might not most of our bad habits be thus nipped

in the bud, if parents and tutors were attentively to watch every evil propensity as it rises? Instead of which, these matters are looked upon as boyish tricks—youthful overflowings of fancy, which it would be a pity to correct. The culprit goes unpunished—his crimes increase, and, in some instances, a miserable and shameful death is the consequence.


In a few days after the above accident, my mother took a house at Fulham, and we left Kensington, my school, and all my old companions: We were conveyed to our new residence in a hackney coach, in which were my father, mother, and self; Mrs. Betty, an antiquated virgin, who had long lived in the family; and an old dog, called *Prosper*. Christopher, our honest Black, was seated with the coachman.

The cavalcade had proceeded about a mile, when an accident happened, which I shall relate, because it does honour to the feelings of our *Black Brethren*.

A poor ass, heavily laden, to make way for us, had crept close to the hedge; which a malicious carter observing, whipp'd his horses so near it, that the unfortunate animal, weak and overburdened, fell under the load, and one of the wheels went over its head. My father started—mother screamed—Betty said, 'La! ma'am, it's nothing but a jack-ass'—and I called the carter 'a barbarous dog.' But honest Christopher did not take it so quietly; his blood boiled, and he uttered a volley of incoherent language, that none of us understood; only, now and then, we could hear—'Dam a dog!—kill ass! poor ass!—Dam a rogue—a villain—a scoundrel!' By this time the owner of the prostrate beast had stopped the carter's horses, and a mob was collected; but, unfortunately, the sandman was old and feeble, consequently unable to gain redress by force; and all he could say was answered by a laugh from the brute who had injured him, till Christopher's rhapsody, as above, drew the attention of all present. 'Give us

none of your *jabber*, you *black devil*,' said the carter, 'or I'll pull you off your rostrum, *Mr. Belzebub*!' Christopher now began to be more articulate: You kill a poor ass, you dam rogue!—and, if my massa and missy vill let a me, me vill teach a you to call a me *Belzebub*.' 'You be d——d!' said the brute; and taking a large quid of tobacco from his underlip, threw it in Christopher's face. This was too much for Kit to bear; down he jumped, and the mob made a ring for the combatants. 'Christopher shan't fight,' said my mother. 'He shall,' exclaimed my father—'and so would I too, if I could. If Kit conquers, I'll give him a guinea; I know he is game, but he wants science—Hallo, Kit!—harkee! don't fight fast—follow your blow, and keep under your wind!' Kit was tall, well made, and muscular; about twenty-five years of age, with courage equal to any thing, but little or no knowledge in the *Broughtonian* science. This infernal carter was young, broad set, strong built, and well studied in the art of boxing; in short, he was above a match for Kit. However, to it they went—now advancing—now retreating—much pressure on both sides; at length Christopher's spirit broke through all bounds, and he lent his adversary a blow under the left ear, which laid him prostrate. A loud huzza from the mob, with 'Well done, *Blackey*!' gave us hopes that Kit was victorious; but this was by no means the case; the carter returned to the charge with redoubled fury, and for half an hour a more equal and desperate contest was never seen. At length, however, skill and cool deliberation had well nigh overcome strength and true courage; poor Kit, almost spent with giving and receiving many weighty blows, began to lose ground. The mob loudly proclaimed the carter's superiority. My mother cried, so did I; my father swore; Prosper bark'd; Betty said, 'Don't cry, ma'am, you know he is but a *Black*,' when, on

a sudden, 'Well done, *Blackey!*' again gave us hopes. Kit was left-handed; his antagonist, not being aware of this, kept not so good a guard on that side, as he otherwise would have done. Christopher observing this, and fully bent on retrieving his honor, threw all his strength into his left arm, and aimed a savage blow between the carter's eyes, which instantly took effect, by leaving him in total darkness. He now struck at random, while Kit, encouraged by the mob, rallied his almost exhausted strength, and poured in such a volley of blows, that our joy for his victory was turned into pity for the vanquished carter, on whom no trace of a human face could be seen. At our request the mob took him into a public-house, very near the scene of action.

Kit, remaining master of the field, was idolized by the populace. 'Never saw a *Black* fight so before,' said one—'He's a fine fellow,' cried another—'What a pity he should be a *slave!*' exclaimed a third. 'It's a lie!'—said my father, leaning out of the coach window—'he's no *slave*; he's a *christian*, and entitled to the liberty of an *Englishman*—No *slaves* in *this country*, my *lords*—God bless the King! I'll drink his health,  so shall Kit—Here, my honest friend, fetch a crown-bowl of punch.' Before the liquor arrived, my father had sung several verses of 'Britons never shall be slaves.'

By this time Kit had got his bruises anointed, and himself dressed; but when he appeared at the coach door, a figure presented itself, which I shall never forget. No trace of feature was discernible; something like eyes were now and then observed to move under two bags, which, I suppose, would have been black, had his skin been of any other colour; his nose, originally flat, was now totally lost amidst his swelled face. In this condition my father insisted that he should get into the coach, and Mrs. Betty take his seat on the box; which arrangement sensibly mor-

tified the pride of this poor virgin. Thus situated, we pursued our journey, after my mother had given something to the poor man, who, in losing his ass, had lost his all.

Elated with his servant's victory, together with several hearty draughts of punch, my father was uncommonly loquacious. 'Give me thy hand, Kit; black as it is, it is more welcome than many a white one; and thou shalt never want B. B. W. L. whilst I live. This gout will have me one of these days; but—never mind—I'll do my duty whilst I stay; when I go it's God's pleasure—is it not so in your country, Kit?—I'm sure it is—*Providence* is over all, Black or White, though some of my countrymen seem to think otherwise.' Kit would have said something, but could not, for he had cut his tongue in the battle. 'Aye, aye, I know what thou wouldst say—England is the best place—no flogging *here*—no cursed, cruel drivers—a parcel of —' He was going on, and probably would have continued for half an hour without intermission, which was commonly the case, when, as the Sailors say, 'Grog's aboard,' if I had not interrupted him—My father had a great many phrases, and amongst the rest, B. B. W. L. was a great favourite; I remember seeing him knock a saucy shoe black into the mud, and say, 'There's B. B. W. L. for you.'—determined now, to know the meaning of this phrase, I interrupted the discourse with 'pray Father what is the meaning of B. B. W. L.?'—'Bed, Board, Washing, and Lodging, my boy,' replied he, and resumed his discourse with Kit, till we arrived at Fulham.

Our house was situated close to the church, no bad omen, though some wits will say, 'the nearer the church, the further from heaven'—but this was by no means applicable to us, for though my father had it not in his power to attend the public duties of

religion, my mother never missed an opportunity of assembling to praise her Creator, whose holy name she would not hear profaned by any of the family ; and I attribute it to her timely admonitions, that I have been enabled to avoid that great and common vice.

A most excellent garden belonged to our new dwelling, washed by the silver Thames, and this being the first time I had seen much of the country, the rural walks delighted me ; and, together with the thrilling notes of various birds, awakened in my breast sensations altogether new and delightful. This charming retreat had a surprising effect upon us all ; my father's health grew daily better—my mother, always placid and serene, was uncommonly cheerful—Kit's nose began to make its appearance—Mrs. Betty laid aside much of the acidity natural to her disposition—and for my own part, I was so delighted, I thought nothing could possibly increase my happiness—a maid servant was added to the family, to superintend the culinary concerns, Mrs. Betty filling the station of housekeeper, and assisting occasionally at her lady's toilette.

In the town of Fulham an Academy was kept by a Mr. Day, of flogging memory—I shall never forget him—to this school I was sent, and improved more in half a year under this consumer of birch, than I had done the two preceding years. During my infancy, I had been terrified into compliance by my nurse, with tales of ghosts and hobgoblins ; these ideas still remained, though my mother took every method to eradicate them ;—Mr. Day's seminary and our house were parted merely by the church yard, and as I wandered amongst the tombs, on my return from school, though not possessed of *thoughts on night* like the angelic Young, I had *young night thoughts* enough to throw me into a perspiration whenever I came there. It happened one evening that I could not get

through my task for attending to stories other boys were relating near me; one in particular asserted, that if any person would say the Lord's prayer backwards, as he went through a church yard, the devil would appear; this alarmed me much, and though I should have had no objection to see any one else make the experiment, I was determined to avoid even thinking of it as I went home—my task not perfect, it was eight o'clock 'ere I was liberated, the night was of a pitchy darkness and stormy. I had advanced as far as the church yard, endeavouring to drive the story of the prayer backwards out of my head, but in vain; I could not help reflecting how odd it must sound—how difficult to repeat, and was trying a word or two, when in the footpath, though at a considerable distance, I saw a glimmering light, not constant, but at intervals.—I stopped irresolute—terror worked so fast upon my imagination, that 'ere I had well perceived its object, my hair stood an end—my knees trembled under me—I had a fearful certainty it was the devil, and that my attempt at the prayer had raised him. What was to be done? Turn back to school? No! I would as soon face his diabolic majesty as do that; getting home without passing the light, or going round the church, and then perhaps he might meet me on the other side;—terrified beyond description, I saw no way but one; as attempting the prayer backwards had raised this fiend, surely speaking it the right way would lay him again; so down I dropp'd on my knees in the dirt and began; but to my astonishment and dismay, it produced a contrary effect; the light approached in a direct line, and seemingly very fast; I redoubled my volubility, and repeated the words as quick as I could articulate; when lo! the spectre stood within a few paces of me, and I had a view of his horrible front. In size, it bore some resemblance to a human figure—the countenance was perfectly black, with



eyes that looked like globes of fire, and a mouth of horrible dimensions; over the head, and reaching to the ground, was thrown something that appeared like the pall used at burials—in his hand he bore a burning torch, which ever and anon, he held towards me in a menacing posture; then said, with hollow voice, and accents which froze my blood—‘What! have I found you?’—Unable to sustain myself under circumstances which appeared so horrific, I fell on my face, and roared like a bull; in which situation I was taken up by this tremendous apparition, and wafted through the air, as I thought, to some infernal region, where I was laid upon the ground, keeping my eyes shut, fearful of encountering more dreadful objects; my hands were now seized, and bastinadoed with great fury; my nose was next assailed by fumes of brimstone—this done I had a moment’s rest, and lay as still as death, that I might not, by impatience, incur the displeasure of my infernal tormentors.—After a short silence, my hand was again taken, though not so roughly as before, and a well known voice in plaintive accents sighed forth—‘my child! my child, art thou gone for ever?’—In a moment I opened my eyes and found myself at home, my mother bathing my hand with her tears, and the family waiting in sad expectation of my death. Staying longer than usual at school, together with the darkness of the night, had alarmed my mother, and Kit was despatched in search of me, with a flambeau and my father’s rocquelaure, the hood of which he had pulled over his head; when he approached and beheld me kneeling with uplifted hands and face seemingly convulsed, the poor fellow concluded I was in a fit, he therefore took me under his arm, and ran like lightning home; Kit and Mrs. Betty gave me the bastinado upon my hands, whilst my mother’s smelling bottle appeared to my terrified imagination like sulphurous fumes,

till her voice encouraged me to look around; my parent's joy at my recovery, was not to be described, and only equalled by her anger when she knew the cause of this alarm. The church clock proclaimed the hour of ten, and supperless I was going to bed, when my mother threw on her cloak and bade me follow; like a criminal I obeyed; she advanced through the burial ground, till we came to the church porch, where I was commanded to remain till the clock struck eleven, or never presume to appear before her again. Too well acquainted with her firmness to hazard a word in opposition, I sat terrified, trembling, and forming ten thousand horrible ideas which the objects around me helped to promote. I listened to my parent's receding footsteps till they were no longer discernible; all was dark and silent, except the whistling of the wind, through an old hollow yew tree which hung over the porch—and by its melancholy motion increased that terror which the time and place naturally conspired to create. The coldness of a December night was unfelt, perspiration issued at every pore; I was....‘distilled almost to jelly with my fears,’ when the voice of honest Christopher, more welcome to my ears ‘than dew to the parched earth’ relieved me from this fearful bondage. The clock struck eleven, Kit climbed over the wall, I knocked at the door, was admitted into the parlour, and after some refreshment, my mother concluded the evening in the following manner. ‘I hope, Sir, you now see the folly of listening to idle stories invented by servants to frighten children; and which, I am sorry to see, the pains I have bestowed in forming your principles, have not been able to preserve you from; call sense and reflection to your aid, and you will see the wickedness of supposing, even for a moment, that the great author of nature, should break his laws merely to alarm an insignificant individual;—pre-

serve a good conscience, and you have nothing to fear ; ‘ to be good is to be happy, angels are happier than mankind because they are better.’ Go to bed my son, and reflect on what I have said—let *your* prayer be, as it shall be *mine*, that it may please the *Omnipotent* to give you such a confidence in his *mercy*, and obedience to his *commands*, as may lead you to *good* here, and God hereafter. Good night.’

## CHAPTER II.

## "THE CHAPTER OF ACCIDENTS."

MISS LEE.

---

"He has a tear for pity, and a hand, open as day, for melting charity."  
SHAKESPEARE.

---

I WAS now in my ninth year, and had attained a pretty competent knowledge of reading, writing, and arithmetic, when a change took place in the politice of our family. After declining business, my father found that he had more debts, than property to discharge them; and as they must instantly be paid, my mother's annuity was put under stoppages, for money borrowed. Thus situated, it was found necessary, either to retrench our mode of living, or retire to some cheaper part of the kingdom; the latter was resolved upon, and Cheshire the spot recommended for our abode. Letters of introduction were procured to several families in Chester; a small, but convenient, house was taken in that city, and an early day fixed for our departure.

My mother, from a motive of economy, hired a chaise of a decayed gentleman's servant, for five guineas, to carry us the journey, in which were to be conveyed my father, mother, Mrs. Betty, and

self; Christopher to follow on horseback. Every thing settled, the neighbours were invited to take a cheerful glass with my father, the evening previous to our departure. The conviviality of the party brought a return of gout, on which account my mother would have deferred our journey, but could not prevail; every thing was fixed and settled, and go we must. At seven o'clock in the morning the chaise was at the door; but so curious an equipage was rarely seen—it bore strong marks of antiquity, with some appearance of its former grandeur; but that was so nearly lost, in its present poverty, that very few traces were discernible. The lining had been originally, dark green silk, but had undergone such frequent repairs with green stuff of various shades, that only a nice observer could distinguish its former elegance. Two of the windows were handsome plate glass; the third was divided into four small panes; and the fourth, for the benefit of the air, had no glass at all. The postillion next attracted our attention; he was between forty-five and fifty years of age; had lived a number of years with a very morose old gentleman, of so unamiable a temper, that he never saw company, nor, indeed, exchanged a word with any body except his man. Jacob had contracted a good deal of his master's misanthropy; he seldom answered our questions with more than monosyllables, and that in a surly tone, we do not expect from men of his description. His humour, however, so far gained upon his late master, that he left him his old family chaise, and a small sum of money, with which he bought the horses that drew it. His person was short and corpulent, with only one eye; he wore the livery of his late master, a brown wig, and a cocked hat slouched before. His cattle were very unequally matched, extremely poor, and seemingly weak.

The idea of commencing so long a journey, in such a crazy conveyance, exceedingly chagrined my mother, who told the man her apprehensions; but he assured her, 'the chaise was in excellent repair, and the horses strong enough to draw her and her family all over England.' On this assurance, Christopher was ordered to stow the baggage, which, owing to the quantity, required some contrivance. To give my father's gout as much room as possible, my mother and her maid were obliged to sit in a very small compass, with each a bundle on their knees; I occupied a stool at their feet. The pockets were filled with cakes, apples, books, and my father's brandy bottle; so that when the door was shut, we were wedged together like a box of coals. Christopher followed on a horse, so small, that his legs nearly touched the ground; and after him waddled old Prosper, whose swiftest pace could not accomplish more than three miles an hour. Mrs. Betty's green bag, tied on the top of the chaise, with the general bulk of our luggage, was a great trouble to my father—'What the deuce, Betty, have you got in that bag?—Foul linen, and your shaving apparatus, I suppose.' My mother, not yet reconciled to the carriage and horses, paid very little attention to the questions I, from time to time, asked, relative to the gentlemen's seats, and other novelties, that attracted my attention.

In this dissatisfied manner passed the time, till we reached the town appointed for breakfast; at the entrance of which, our postillion, by virtue of his whip, infused such spirit into his horses, that we drove up to the inn, with more than usual alacrity. Breakfast made its appearance, and the waiter was desired to send our servant in with the dog; but neither dog nor servant was yet arrived. Much anxiety was evinced by all, except the virgin Betty, lest some accident had happened. The first plate of

muffins was quickly demolished, and we had just begun the attack on a second—when who should pass the window, but Christopher, leading his little horse, and carrying Prosper on his shoulders.

‘Well, Kit! what’s the matter?—we were afraid of some accident—what’s amiss with Prosper!’

‘Vy, sir, about two mile off, I found de poor old dog had gone long as he could; for he lie down, wag his tail, and look at me. I den get off de horse for he not carry us both—took him on my back, and he has lick a my face all de vay, to tank me.’

‘So you staid behind, to help poor Prosper in his distress! Here—here’s half a crown for thee, and may’st thou never want a friend in the same situation! go, get thy breakfast.’

The animal had bread and milk set before him, but could not eat; whilst Mrs. Betty observed—  
‘Don’t you think, sir, that good meat would be better bestowed on some poor Christian?’

‘Shew me a Christian or a Jew—no matter what he is called—that requires help, and I’ll thank heaven for the opportunity of relieving him; but because there are christians, as you say, in want, though not within our knowledge, shall I neglect the distress of a faithful dog, equally the work of the Almighty, as myself?—Ah! you are a right, old maid—a parcel of hard hearted’—he was here interrupted by Kit, who came to know what corn the little horse must have?—‘a peck to be sure, or he’ll never be able to perform his journey, and you’ll be left behind at the next stage to carry him.’ Breakfast ended, a consultation was held relative to Prosper; my mother was for taking him into the chaise, but Mrs. Betty found herself much hurt at the idea;—

‘La! Ma’am, a dog in a chaise! when we are already so crammed! I can’t imagine what people see in such creatures to be fond of! besides he is so old, he can’t live long, therefore I think the most



reasonable thing will be to hang him out of the way!'  
 ——'Hang him!' said my father, with a look which indicated something too contemptible to describe, and muttered to himself '*hard hearted B—ch.*'

Every thing settled, and the chaise ordered to the door, the mountain of boxes tied on before and behind, attracted the attention of the natives, and various conjectures were formed; some said we were stage players—but when Kit put the dog into the chaise they were confirmed in the opinion, that it was a *show*, with a *black drummer*, and a *dog of knowledge*, and the green bag held the conjuring apparatus. —Nay, Kit was ask'd, why he could not stay a night or two; 'for' said one, 'there have been none in your way here for two years.' Christopher not understanding what they meant, took little notice, but when he came supplanting my father, with swelled legs, large cocked hat, long ruffles, and in all respects, a man of singular appearance; they could contain themselves no longer, but set up a shout, and cried, 'punch and the devil—punch and the devil.' Mother, Mrs. Betty, and self, were next squeezed in, and having received our complement of boxes, bags, and hats, we were again saluted with a loud laugh, occasioned by Christopher's mounting his poney, which the peck of corn had set a capering, to the great diversion of the mob. Through the town our meagre horses were pushed on by the queer looking postillion, at a pace they could not maintain; however, a slow trot was accomplished, and continued for eight miles, during which time my father amused himself with a small pocket Horace, which he generally carried about him. Two miles further brought us to dinner, and it was agreed that six more should conclude the day's journey. A most excellent meal made amends for the inconveniences of the road, and after resting two hours, we proceeded without

attracting *much* notice. But this peaceful state was not to be of long continuance. We had with difficulty proceeded half way, when it was thought necessary to send Kit forward to prepare beds, &c. &c. whilst we came slowly after—and slow indeed it was—our poor horses had worked miracles, considering *their* appearance, and *our* weight; but now quite fatigued, they could not raise a trot, and would doubtless have made a total stop had not an accident, unlucky enough for us, given them half an hour's respite.—The antiquity of the chaise, with the heavy load it carried, caused a crash from one of the hind wheels, not sufficient to overturn it, but to render our proceeding further without repairs impossible. Much apprehension was apparent in every countenance—what was to be done, required some consideration—the next town was two miles distant—there were two respectable inns, but no chaise kept at either—at length we got my father mounted on one of the horses, the rest of the party following on foot; but still there was a matter to settle, Mrs. Betty would not stir a foot without her green bag, which being at last untied, we proceeded—first my father on the high-boned hack, with his crutches—next, mother and I, with Prosper—Mrs. Betty carrying the green bag, closed the rear. If in the morning we were taken for show folks, what could we hope for now? We were, however, pleasingly deceived—'tis true on entering the town, we had plenty of gazers, for it happened to be the annual fair; but they were in general peaceable country folks, not degraded by that decided impudence so common in large populous towns; yet they were not without observation, though it proved of an harmless sort—'That thick legged gentleman,' said one, 'who rides the horse, with two sticks before him, is a famous cudgel player, I know him well enough, he always come to our fair; 'tis Squire C——, the

best player at single stick in the country, and I'll lay a quart he's come to challenge somebody—let's follow up, we shall have rare sport if he throws down his sticks.\* Mrs. Betty's green bag was supposed to contain the fighting cloths, and her ill-natured replies to their simple questions, were great cause of mirth, and sometimes drew a smile even from my mother—so certain were the people of the Squire's skill in the art of breaking heads, that his attendants were numerous; at length he stopped his horse, and asked a lusty country fellow, 'which was the St. George?'

'Oh! he's going to tip us St. George,' said the clown to one of his companions—

'I say young man, do you know the St. George?'

'No Sir, but we'll thank you to shew it us.'

'Why you rascal, if I knew, I should not have asked you.'

'Oh your honour may call me what names you please, but you shan't make me fight.'

My father, much surprised, was turning his horse, when down dropped his crutches, and we being considerably in the rear, he asked the same fellow to take them up....

'No no, Master C——, I know better than that—I don't want a broken head, and if you stay here till somebody picks 'em up, you may tarry all night—we are none of us a match for your worship.' Astonished to see my father surrounded in this manner, I ran to him, took up his sticks, and inquired the way to the George and Dragon! this question was readily understood, and we were shewn into the yard. Christopher ran out and assisted his master to

\* It is necessary to inform the reader, that the country we were then in, is famous for cudgel playing—it was no uncommon thing for the champion to ride through the town, and when he came to the Market Cross, to throw down his sticks; the man who was bold enough to take them up, must fight him then and there.

descend from the boney ridge of the tall chaise horse, saying with sincere concern in his countenance, ‘Dear Sir, vat de matter? vere be de chay? broke! ah! me tought de old ting never carry us—are you hurt, Sir?’ ‘No, Kit, not hurt, but cursedly mortified—we have had our old friends with us again—but come—shew me into the house—get me a glass of brandy, and some soft pomatum, for I declare that horse’s back is as sharp as a scythe.’ A comfortable room put us all into good humour, and heartily we laughed at my father’s comments on this day’s journey, in which Mrs. Betty’s green bag was not forgotten. Our thoughts naturally reverted to the group we had left two miles off—proper people were despatched, and before supper we had the pleasure of seeing all that belonged to us safely housed—a pipe of tobacco and some good punch, gave relief to my father’s spirits, and indeed to all, except Mrs. Betty, who, according to custom, threw cold water upon every enjoyment. In looking over the contents of her bag, she found her best head dress so maul’d, and distorted from its wonted appearance, that, in a fit of passion, she threw it on the floor; a shower of tears bedewed her maiden cheeks, and with sobs and sighs, she thus addressed my astonished parents.

‘Spoil’d—spoil’d—for ever spoil’d—not a thing in the bag fit to be seen—fool that I was, to come out in such a manner.—If Sir William knew that I was reduced to this! why did I ever leave his service? he that sent his own carriage with me to London, rather than I should be incommoded in the public stage—and now to be cram’d up with four, in a thing not fit to be called a carriage’—here she was interrupted by my mother—‘Betty recollect, when you came to live with me in London, you were to fill the place of housekeeper for twenty pounds a year—when we removed from town, I still kept you, though against your master’s inclination, and my

interest; but the great opinion I entertained of your honesty, together with my regard for your relations, made me reconcile this act of imprudence. Previous to our undertaking this journey I gave you your choice, either to quit my service, or go with us into the country, on the footing of a common servant. I have only this to say—if you will endeavour to correct your temper, which is a very bad one, your place shall be made easy and comfortable—if not, I will pay your fare back, from the first post town we come to’—‘aye aye,’ said my father, ‘pack her off.’ Mrs. Betty now changed her tune. ‘Ah madam! do you think I am so mercenary as to leave you at such a time as this? No! if you give me no wages, I’ll stay with you till times are better.’ This instantly did the business, and my father said, ‘well, well, stay then, and be quiet, get married and you’ll be better tempered.’

During this discourse the unfortunate wig, which lay in disgrace on the floor, was never thought of; but now Mrs. Betty began to return the contents into her bag, when lo! the wig was missing; as Kit had been in to replenish the bowl, it was supposed he had taken it out with him; he was again summoned and asked whether he had seen Mrs. Betty’s wig? ‘Whig! no, Sir, me see no wig.’ ‘Then it must be in the room, look about.’ Tables and chairs were removed, when at last Kit cried out, ‘here its—here its:’ and there sure enough it was, but spread about in parts innumerable; a small black terrier, which lay in the room when we entered, had drawn the wig behind a large box, where he lay with his fore paws upon it, tearing to pieces this noble ornament of maiden charms. Here was fresh cause for laughter on one side, and tears on the other. Mrs. Betty caught up the poker, and would doubtless have despatched the little animal, had not her fellow servant interposed.

My father as soon as he could speak for laughter, promised to buy her a new wig, at the first town where a person could be found of ability sufficient to make one. Thus consoled, Mrs. Betty, and all parties went in tolerably good humour to bed.

We were, according to direction, called the next morning at six o'clock and found our carriage at the door, repaired, and much improved, according to the opinion of Jacob. The dinner hour saw us comfortably seated in the front room of an inn: It is a general observation, that the comforts of life are rendered more valuable by being frequently contrasted with their opposites; this was exactly our case, so little of the former had we on the road, that, seated in a snug room, we were in no hurry to remove; my father had filled his second pipe, when a confused noise of several voices assailed our ears; I was sent out to learn the occasion of this disturbance, when on entering the kitchen, I beheld Jacob without his wig, the cook standing over him with the ladle, exclaiming—'I'll teach you to strike me, you one-ey'd dog.' The cause of this affray was discovered to be a starling, whose name was Jacob, in a cage at the top of the room. Our postillion standing by the fire, at which the cook was employed, heard a voice cry, 'Jacob, blow your nose, you dirty dog.' He swore if she said so again he'd make her repent; after some time was repeated 'Jacob blow your nose, you dirty dog.' His discontented spirit could brook no more; smack went his hand against the cheek of his greasy adversary, who being of masculine make, seized by the throat the affronted driver, and was proceeding to treat him very roughly, when the landlord's interposition set him at liberty, restored his wig, which, in the scuffle, had fallen into the dripping pan, and convinced him that his namesake, in the cage, was the sole cause of the imaginary insult. A tiresome fatiguing stage closed the week,

and the horses, had they power of reflection, could not have been better pleased in the Sabbath day's rest than we were.

Monday morning found us all refreshed, and ready to encounter the difficulties we had no doubt of meeting, and our surprise to find the rest of our journey smooth and tranquil, was in consequence the greater.

For two days we continued our route, unmarked by any occurrence worth relating; the third, as we were sociably chatting after dinner, a shrill voice arrested the attention of us all. 'Turn out, I say, you poor pitiful ragamuffin—week after week and no money—plenty of promises, but they won't do any longer, so either pay your way or turn out—you can't work for your living, forsooth, because you are a gentleman——deliver me from such gentry I say—there's your doll of a wife, too, might pick up a penny in an honest way if she would, but ma'am's too fine a lady for that, afraid of spoiling her white hands, I suppose.' This delicate harangue brought us all, except my father, to the place of action, when a scene presented itself, not so laughable, but much more pitious than that wherein Jacob was the hero. Upon a kind of wooden couch, near the fire, sat a pale looking man in an oddish kind of motley dress, that seemed as well as its master, to have seen better days; anxiety was visible in his countenance, though he bore, with wonderful fortitude, the abuse of his terrible-tongued landlady; who, notwithstanding our presence, was beginning the second part of this oration, when a venerable gentleman, dressed in black, whose silver locks commanded respect from all beholders, that instant passed the door;—he stopped 'Dear Sir, is that you?' said the *mild creature*, 'I am glad you are come;—this man, Sir, is a very bad man, Sir, you know I am a poor woman who work hard for my living, and, as you said in your sermon

yesterday, he that oppresseth the poor is a bad man.'

'How has he offended you?'

'Why, Sir, he has a wife and three brats, and I have kept them this fortnight and never seen the colour of their money; to be sure they spent freely enough when first they came, but it was soon done, and now he never calls for even a pint of beer—three crowns is my due, and I'll have it, if there is law in the country.'

'Pray my good woman, who is this gentleman, against whom you seem so violent?'

'Who is he? why he's one of those you preach so much against, one of your player men, I wish you could preach 'em out of the town; why, Sir, they are all starving, I don't think this man has had a good meal this fortnight, except what I have given him, and now you see his gratitude.' The old gentleman approached this son of poverty—'You serve the stage, young man, would I could teach you to serve your God, you would find him a better master—you see the wages of sin, even in *this* world, are not worth engaging for—pardon me, I mean not to upbraid or hurt your feelings, already much oppressed by brutal usage—my master sends you this'—putting a guinea into his hand—'retire and thank him.'

'Who is your master? and where and how shall I thank him?' Inquired the Thespian, with eyes brimful of gratitude.

'God is my master—return him thanks—how? on your knees—where? in private, in public, at all times, in your principles and in your practice; fare-well—go—comfort your wife and children.'

The poor astonished player, though a dealer in words, was totally at a loss—he chuckled—he sobb'd—and left the room.

'Three crowns is your demand upon our afflicted brother,' said this uncommon man. 'Yes Sir,



fifteen shillings, and I'll afflict him worse, if he does not pay me—he has two or three rags up stairs, which I'll seize and pay myself, since nobody else will.'

'Yes, I will, and I bless God I have it in my power to put a stop to your inhumanity, and ease the sufferings of that miserable man—good heaven! what can you think of yourself? how terrible will be your situation, when on a death-bed calling for that mercy, you refuse a fellow creature; I shudder whilst under your roof, and leave it, as I would a pestilence; but it is my duty to admonish you, repent ere it is too late, and may the Lord pardon your sins.' With this he laid fifteen shillings on the table, and left the company in amazement—our landlady first found the use of her tongue—'pardon my sins indeed! and why not his own? I warrant he has as much to answer for, as I have, getting a parcel of people together, that ought to be minding their work, and providing for their families—why it was but yesterday, he was preaching every body to the devil that encouraged these players, and to day he's the first to do it himself.' 'This gentleman is a clergyman, I suppose,' said my mother—'A clergyman! not he indeed—it's old John Wesley, the methodist, that goes preaching up and down, and draws all the idle vagabonds in the country after him.'

We now joined my father, who could only be a distant auditor of what passed, but the little he had gathered was sufficient to raise the waters; which, in generous indignation, trickled down his cheeks—'Here Kit, take this guinea up to the poor man, and let us leave this infernal woman's house, before it tumbles on our heads.'

Within ten miles of our destined port we stopped at a pleasant village, and whilst dinner was preparing, Kit and the waiter carried my father to a field,

about an hundred yards from the house, which commanded a most beautiful prospect, and where the breeze tempered the uncommon heat of the day—there, with his faithful Prosper, sat the victim of a most acute disorder, and who had ransacked the whole *materia medica* for a cure in vain—short sighted mortal! how little did he expect to find relief in so remote a place—yet so it was—what the sons of Galen had in vain attempted, was accomplished by—a savage bull! which long had kept the villagers at bay. In an adjoining copse, the lordly beast was feeding—Prosper gave a wanton bark, as he played around his master, the bull roared—leaped the hedge—gave battle to the playful cur—and laid him sprawling on his back—in vain my father called on Kit and Jacob—the bull towards him turned his head—and roared, and tore the earth; there was no alternative—forgetful of his gout he runs—the limbs that had so long been useless, are restored—They bear him strongly to the house. Kit was sent to the assistance of poor Prosper—alas! too late—the faithful dog had breathed his last!—Reader! we were all sorry—we were all surprised—the latter was predominant—Prosper was out of pain—my father was able to walk—we shed a tear over the former, as we put him in the ground—we laughed with, and congratulated the latter, on his escape and recovery.

At six o'clock we stopped at the Feathers in Chester, after a tiresome journey of ten days.

## CHAPTER III.

## "WILD OATS."

O'KEEFE.

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"Tho' I kill him not, I am the cause

"His death was so effected."

"*All's Well that Ends Well.*"

"The case of that huge Spirit now is cold."

"*Anthony and Cleopatra.*"

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WITHOUT loss of time, I was placed at the Grammar School under the care of the Rev. Mr. Vanburgh, whose memory is held in veneration by all who had the advantage of his instruction or the pleasure of his acquaintance; he was a steady friend, a tender father, an indulgent master. Peace to his memory! 'he has not left a better man to lament his loss' Under so kind a tutor, I found myself particularly happy, and the regret of leaving my parents for the first time, was soon dissipated. Mr. Crane, the under master, was a man of great erudition; by natural genius, and indefatigable industry, he had made himself master of the Greek, Latin and Hebrew languages at the early age of sixteen; in short, he was one of the first classic scholars in the kingdom; the Bishop soon distinguished, and

rewards his talents with the title of Reverend; to this, powerful friends added a living, which he still enjoys in the city of Chester. I have been thus particular, because this gentleman proved himself a sincere and steady friend in hours of affliction, and distress.

I was three years happily situated in this worthy family, when my father's gout returned with double force—*Dr. Bull* was not at hand, but an Irish physician made one, by sending him to bathe in salt water, which threw the disorder into his head, and was very near depriving him of existence—of his reason, he was bereaved for some time; this was cause of great affliction to my mother; contracted in circumstances, rejected by all her relatives in consequence of her marriage, nearly a stranger in the town, and now deprived of the comfort and advice of him, for whom she had given up the hope of family and fortune; my company was absolutely necessary; accordingly I was taken home, though still continued a day scholar. My father's situation requiring air, a small house was taken in the suburbs, to which we removed; the breeze was salubrious, the prospect delightful, and great hopes were entertained of their efficacy. But alas! how little dependance can be placed on the best and strongest constitutions, or who can say to his neighbour, though ever so weak, 'my life is better than thine.' My father, the only invalid in the family, has lived to lament the loss of every individual except myself.

At Boughton, six months passed without any remarkable occurrence, when a melancholy event happened, which threw a gloom over us all. At the Whitsuntide vacation, I was permitted to invite two of my school fellows to pass a week with me; our pleasant garden sloped down to the river Dee, by the side of which a neighbour's boat was fastened; this had oft attracted our attention; one fine evening, it

was determined to cut the moorings and take an excursion; for some time we paddled along very successfully, still keeping sight of the house; at length, grown wanton, we relinquished the oars, and began to play tricks, sitting on the gunwale of the boat, and swinging backwards and forwards, till an unusual effort upset her. Kit, who was at work in the garden, heard a dreadful cry, and running to the side of the river, beheld the boat with her bottom upwards; without undressing, he jumped in, and swam to it; at the instant one of my companions came to the top of the water; laying the youth on the bank, again he plunged, crying 'God help poor Massa.' For sometime he was unsuccessful, till seeing something at a distance, he made a violent effort, and caught hold of my coat, as I was sinking, probably never to rise again. In triumph he bore me to the water's edge, and was using every effort for my recovery, when a by-stander inquired, 'if there were not three in the boat?' Kit turned up his eyes with a countenance of horror, but, as if my safety was his only concern, continued his attention. The man who asked the question, observed that one end of the boat was considerably lower in the water than the other, as if pulled down by a weight; conceiving it might be our poor companion, he asked Kit for pity's sake, to rescue the boy if possible, and he would take care of me, who now began to shew signs of life. Once more he darted through the stream, which had taken the boat to a considerable distance, he swam round her, but could discover nothing, though it was evident something pulled down one end; at length he dived under her, and found the body of this poor lad, who had in the agonies of death, laid hold of the boat, and grasped it with such force, that Kit was long ere he could extricate him—; nearly exhausted, this faithful creature, one corner of the boy's coat in his mouth, with difficulty reached the

shore, where faint and sick, he sunk beside the corpse he had rescued.

A short time restored me and my friend Lewis, but Thompson was gone for ever! would I could say, he was the only victim—alas! honest Christopher, the best of created beings, the most humane of men, was seized with a spitting of blood, which terminated his life in three months. Deeply penetrated with gratitude for the life he had saved, poor Kit was dearer to me than ever; full of wishes and prayers for his recovery, I spent all my leisure hours in his company, talking with and reading to him, till the fatal day his soul took wing to everlasting happiness.

This dreadful calamity made a deep impression on my mind, and though thirty years have elapsed, still the remembrance calls forth the tear of affection which now bedews the paper on which I write. Poor Kit! that trusty servant, that faithful friend! nobly endeavouring to save the lives of his fellow creatures, lost his own; but the *Great Disposer* of all things, who bears no respect to *persons, colour, or country*, will give him a bright reward in those realms where *slavery* is not known, and where the *tyrants* of the earth can never enter.

Arrived at my fifteenth year, I was desired to make choice of a profession; the army, law, physic, and divinity, were laid before me, in all of which my mother's relations had it amply in their power to assist and promote my success; but, by a strange fatality, I chose to be a manufacturer of woollen cloth; my mother made many objections, but, perceiving me bent upon it, begged Mr. B—— the woollen draper to inquire for a suitable situation; in the mean time I continued at school, but contracted a fresh set of acquaintance, rather older than myself, with whom I often frequented the theatre; here I found a satisfaction that nothing else could give, and became so

enraptured with plays and players, that I neglected school, for several days together, in order to attend rehearsals and study speeches; telling lies both at school and at home, in order to conceal my new attachment, and extort money to support it.

Amongst my acquaintance, there was one whom I unfortunately selected as my bosom friend, merely because his inclination for the stage was equally strong as my own; though at the same time he had other predominant evil propensities, which I was fortunate enough to discover, 'ere I had fallen a sacrifice to them. One night we were both penniless, yet see the play we must; what was to be done? 'I have it,' said Tom, 'keep an eye on the door, and the first time the stage keeper comes out, we can slip behind the scenes; I'll hide in one of the lumber chests, and you shall creep into Magog.' Magog was a large figure, made to represent the giant of that name; he had been used in a pantomime at the beginning of the season, but now stood behind the scenes; the body was hollow, and large enough to contain a moderate sized man; the limbs were so constructed, that by pulling a rope, the whole figure would drop to pieces; this hollow piece of mechanism, had served Tom for a hiding place before; as we had planned, so it succeeded: I found myself safely lodged in the carcase of Magog, with the pleasing certainty of seeing the play, by creeping out the first opportunity, and presenting myself, as if just come from the front of the house. I was scarcely fixed in my new habitation, when the stage keeper returned, accompanied by the manager, who gave orders to prepare every thing for the representation of the pantomime, which was to be exhibited in lieu of the farce advertised, owing to the indisposition of a favourite performer. Alarmed to agitation, I determined to facilitate my escape the moment their backs were turned; but unfortunately the first preparation was begun upon the

giant; the ropes were properly fixed, the head fitted to the body, and the monster drawn from the wall, to be in greater readiness for his appearance; 'he's confounded heavy' said the carpenter, 'I wish he was lighter' thought I. All my hopes of escape vanished; to creep out in his present tottering situation was impossible, without throwing down the whole apparatus; this I durst not risk, but made a solemn resolution, if I escaped discovery this time, never to be guilty of the like in future.

Three hours passed, the most painful I had ever known—the scene drew up, Magog was discovered, the different characters skipping about with the greatest alacrity, till one entered, dressed as a landlord, with a large bowl of punch, which after some time, was poured down Magog's throat, and bedewed me in a plentiful manner. Almost suffocated with heat, the cold contents of the bowl were tolerably pleasant at the moment; but the consequence was, a violent cold and fever, which confined me for nearly a month afterwards—at length Harlequin gave the necessary signal, the figure dropped to pieces, and discovered its contents, to the surprise and astonishment of every body—covered with cobwebs and dirt, wet to the skin, pale and trembling with fear, the house roared with laughter. Not long did I continue their spectacle, but took to my heels, overturning every thing that stood in my way, and rued the time I first thought of getting into Magog.

As it was more than probable the affair would get wind, I determined to relate the whole without disguise. My father said 'I was rightly served, he hoped it would teach me to be above such mean dirty tricks in future.' My mother's mind was greatly hurt at my exposure, and her generous heart grieved, that I should be reduced to such shifts for want of money. 'My dear son,' said this best of parents, whilst the tear of affection stole down her cheek, 'I am filled with shame and sorrow; the principles of ho



and honesty, which your father and I have laboured so long to inculcate, are, I fear, dying away, and in their place, profligacy has taken root; how am I to account for this? what company do you keep? be cautious in that particular, 'tis the rock on which many an hopeful bark has split—you are now arrived at years of discretion, and we can do no more than advise; but remember your future *happiness*, or *misery*, depend upon the choice of your companions, ever be above a mean action—deny yourself trifling gratifications, rather than submit to receive them at the price of your integrity;—be mindful of my *advice*—make a proper use of my *indulgence*, and your purse shall be supplied as far as our straitened circumstances will allow.' With this admonition, I received a guinea. Such generous conduct had a greater effect upon me than the most severe chastisement; I weighed her counsel, determined to alter my conduct and avoid my old companion with studied care, through whose persuasion I had sold my books for less than half their value, and was on the point of pilfering my mother's pockets, had not a qualm of conscience intervened.

I next associated with a set of young men, who held weekly meetings for the purpose of repeating speeches out of plays; technically called a *Spouting Club*—here I was in my element, and enjoyed particular satisfaction in the society of a youth of amiable manners, sound understanding, and uncommon general attainments; similarity of taste soon ripened into a friendship, which, I have the pleasure to say, exists at this moment, and I trust will end only with our lives.

On the fifth day of November 1773, our first public exhibition was to commence with the play of the '*Grecian Daughter*.' Clothes suited to the different characters were made at some expense, and paper scenes hung in theatrical order—our friends, each performer introducing two, were led to expect some

amusement from our juvenile efforts, and sat in fond expectation, with hands uplifted, ready to applaud each favourite youth—the music ceases, the curtain ascends, Phocion and Melanthorn appear, when a tremendous noise, which shook the foundation of the house, put a sudden stop to the performance; ghastly fear sat on every countenance—silent apprehension spoke in features most expressive—thunder; an earthquake; the end of all things; ideas of horrid import filled every breast; each sought out his parent, sister, brother, friend; and seemed rejoiced to meet, as if escaped from some great danger, though what it was, conjecture could not fathom—at length it was explained by the entrance of an elderly gentleman, who, with trembling eagerness, said, ‘Is my daughter here?’ ‘I am, my father,’ said a beautiful girl, ‘from whence proceeds this alarm?’ ‘The puppet show is blown up, but thank God thou art safe.’ With this he fell lifeless into the arms of those who stood near, overcome with anxious fears for this, his only child. The gentleman recovered, and our room was quickly empty; dress’d or undress’d, away all posted to view this dreadful spectacle; dreadful indeed it was, and beggars all description; not three hundred yards from our exhibition room stood an edifice called Eaton’s dancing school, in a court detached from other houses; the middle room was used for public shews of various kinds; a lame school master occupied the upper story; beneath was a cellar, belonging to a grocer, filled with gunpowder and other combustibles. One Williams, whose celebrated puppet shew is well remembered as a popular thing of the kind, had advertised for the last night;—that circumstance, together with the holiday, filled the room.—Whether squibs or crackers, which flew about this evening, unfortunately found their way into the cellar, or some spark from the candles in the room above, had reached the powder, could never be ascertained; certain it is, the

place took fire, and blew up the whole building with its contents. The cries of the wounded, the groans of the dying, the darkness of the night, together with the suffocating fumes of brimstone rendered this scene truly awful; twenty-four dead bodies, mangled and disfigured, were carried away by their sorrowing friends; fifty others were dreadfully wounded, many of whom never survived the shocking calamity; and the poor man who rented the cellar, lost his reason.

It is somewhat remarkable, that, previous to the commencement of the performance, the dog who usually carried Mr. Punch across the stage, ran home with the saddle on his back, nor could the people of the house, knowing he would be wanted, get him from under the bed; this stupidity saved his life, and seems to argue an instinctive presentiment of the approaching calamity. Serious and melancholy as this disaster proved, it gave rise to many whimsical, though fabulous, stories—a black man was said to be blown over a house, and discovered up to the middle in a dunghill *unhurt*—the *devil*, was blown through an opposite window, into an *attorney's* bed-chamber—and an honest jack tar, on whose credulity, the puppet shew man had been exercising his magic art, was found under a large beam uninjured, and supposing himself still under the influence of the conjuror, exclaimed as they pulled him out, ‘*blast his eyes, what will he do next?*’——It is related as a fact, that, as the chairman ‘bore dead bodies by,’ one carriage was followed by a crowd of people, who related, ‘that under the rubbish they found the body of a *well dressed gentleman*, who, they hoped would recover, for he had not a limb broke,’ arrived at the infirmary, the chair was opened, lights brought, and this *well dressed gentleman* proved to be no less a person than *Mr. Punch himself*.

The reader may perhaps recollect, the beautiful girl mentioned as an auditor of our Theatrical exhibition; she was the first female who ever caused me

a painful moment! I looked, I sighed, and wished to speak, but could not—School became irksome, I neglected it; a complaint was made to my mother, who strictly questioned me, as to the manner of spending my time? Unused to dissimulate, with hesitation and blushes, I made known to her the situation of my heart, ending with a declaration, that I would never marry any body but my adorable Eliza.

My good parent smiled at my warmth, called my violent attachment, childish folly, and wished earnestly to hear of a situation, far from Chester, where my thoughts would find different employment. As it happened, her wishes were immediately fulfilled; Mr. K. a respectable woollen manufacturer, who lived on the borders of Yorkshire, agreed to take me on trial; my parents were much pleased with his honest bluntness and sincerity; on the contrary, I looked upon him, as the person who was going to tear me from all I held dear, and discovered an hundred imperfections in his appearance, and behaviour: he did not talk politely, his wig was unpowdered, he smoked tobacco, and preferred beer to wine. In short, I said I would rather stay at home.

My mother, had too much penetration to be thus imposed upon; she reasoned against the folly of my observations, and made me ashamed of having uttered them; informing me at the same time, that my guardian, Sir Thomas H. would advance the apprentice fee, and allow me *thirty guineas* per annum for my *pocket expenses*. This last was a weighty argument. In a few days I departed with my master, and left my good parents deeply affected at my loss; I too was grieved, but from another cause, the lovely Eliza was the first object in my thoughts, and in leaving her, I left every thing that could make me happy, as I then thought.

## CHAPTER IV.

## "AS YOU LIKE IT."

SHAKESPEARE.

"Life is but a walking shadow, a poor player,  
That struts, and frets his hour upon the stage,  
And then is heard no more: it is a tale  
Told by an idiot, full of sound, and fury,  
Signifying nothing."

MACBETH.

"Give me the man  
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him  
In my heart's core, aye, in my heart of hearts,  
As I do thee."

HAMLET.

'AS BREVITY is the soul of wit, and tediousness, the outward limbs, and flourishes thereof, I shall be brief;'—well convinced, that our juvenile transactions, should be condensed into as small a compass as the subject will permit; perhaps this observation comes with an ill grace, as many of my readers will think I have been much too prolix in the foregoing pages; 'tis true, I have related a number of childish anecdotes, but they are, I hope, rendered interesting, from a singularity of circumstances, that do not *generally* happen.

In two days I found myself situated at the house of Mr. K. a respectable woollen manufacturer, on

the borders of Yorkshire, at a place called Saddleworth. I cannot help thinking that parents are blameable in consulting too much the childish inclination of boys, in regard to the trade, or profession, they wish to follow; whim, or caprice, too often govern the choice, and parents who ought to have the best knowledge of a child's genius, give up their judgment to the folly of youth; so at least it was with me. Education, and temperament, by no means fitted me for the situation I had chosen; the pulpit, the bar, the army, and the navy, with powerful interest, were given up, and, strange predilection! the drudgery of a dirty manufactory, in an obscure place, fixed upon, as my future employment. Daily associating with servants, and those of the most vulgar description, soon gave me a complete disgust to the employment I had chosen, and I hourly wished myself within the walls of that venerable city, which contained the idol of my affections, and near whose suburbs my much loved parents dwelt.

Mr. K——s house was situated on the side of a hill, commanding a most beautiful and extensive prospect; near him, lived many opulent and respectable clothiers, to whom were apprenticed young men of respectability and fortune, who like myself, found their occupation by no means suitable to their wishes—in society with these, I found a relief from corporal labour, but was soon led into scenes of dissipation by no means suited to my pocket, and still less agreeable to my constitution.

At the expiration of three months, during which I had been upon trial only, I was on the point of giving in my resignation, when a circumstance occurred which totally changed the face of affairs. With an heart greatly susceptible of the tender passion, I had received as I thought, a lasting impression at Chester; but three months absence, had lessened the fair Eliza's influence, and the return of Mr. K.'s eldest

daughter from school, completed the work; a young female was to me a never failing source of attraction; I forsook the nocturnal revels of my dissipated companions, who rallied me on my attachment, but it was not in their power to laugh me out of it. Every thing now bore a different aspect, and I signed the articles of apprenticeship with pleasure. To say the truth, Mr. and Mrs. K. were very good people, and my situation was rendered as comfortable by the domestic indulgence of the one, and the hospitable heart of the other, as I could wish, and more than I deserved, for I looked upon the business with disgust, and neglected it.

I had been two years in Yorkshire, when an event of all others the most distressing my heart had ever known, called me to Chester; my parents were truly dear to me, and thoughtless as I appeared, every letter from home, was bedewed with the tear of affection; my feelings then, may more easily be conceived than described, when the following lines were put into my hand.

*Chester, July 10th, 1775.*

My Dear Son,

I am summoned to attend at the bar of heaven—come and receive the blessing of your

Dying Mother,

M. R.

Let those who have been in similar situations judge of mine, to describe it would be impossible.

I reached Chester that night, but alas! a paralytic affection had deprived my mother, of almost every sense; I approached the bed, and taking her hand, exclaimed, 'Oh! my Mother, grant me your blessing!' with closed eyes and apparently without sen-

sation, I entertained no hopes of an answer to my petition, when, as if collecting every effort of exhausted nature, a gentle pressure of my hand convinced me she heard, and answered my request, with this last, and only mark of affection in her power; for with a heavy sob, she breathed her last, as if her spirit only waited my arrival, ere it took wing to everlasting happiness.

Behold me at sixteen, deprived of my mother, my tried, my only protector; my father, from debility, both of mind and body, was utterly incapable of assisting me, even by advice. At this melancholy crisis, a complication of circumstances rendered my situation truly pitiable. My mother's income, for many years had been insufficient; she was frequently, nay always in arrears with Sir T. H. to whom she had written for a supply previous to her illness. Soon as sorrow would permit, I inquired into the state of our finances, and learnt, that the house for the last three weeks, had been supplied on credit, half-a-guinea comprising the whole stock of ready cash; my feelings at this intelligence, were truly deplorable; a corpse to be buried without money; a father, whose ill health required every indulgence; unable to give the least assistance, either in person, or by advice, for his loss bore heavy upon him, and unless intoxication gave some relief, his pain of body and mind, left him in a state of downright stupidity; added to this, his creditors became clamorous, and threatened an arrest. Attacked by calamity on every side, without a friend to advise, I knew not which way to turn myself—applying to the creditors for assistance, until a remittance arrived, would be exposing our wretchedness, without, perhaps, having the desired effect, and might be the means of precipitating my father into a gaol. At this moment a thought struck me: my old school-master, the Rev. Mr. Crane, still resided in Chester, and I knew,



though his means were comparatively small, his heart was capacious. At any rate, advice would be serviceable. Seated on the bed, where lay a lifeless lump of clay, which, in its animated state, gave existence to a being, as unfortunate as itself, the tear of affection filled my eye—affliction tore my heart. Not so my father : seated in his chair, he had flown for consolation, to his old friend the brandy bottle, and, in the midst of my lamentations, roared out, '*Old Rose, and burn the bellows—the bellows—and burn and burn the bellows!*' These different sensations and employments, were interrupted by a loud rap at the door.

A letter from Sir T—— H——, inclosing a *twenty-pound bank note*, cheered my heart and revived my hopes. I threw myself on my knees, seized the cold hand of my regretted parent, and exclaimed, I believe, with more devotion than at any other period, 'THANK GOD!' This was overheard, and '*Old Rose*' gave place to '*Thank God! For what? For gout?—for poverty?—for the loss of ——*' Here, taking another glass, he finished the sentence with '*Old Rose,*' &c. &c.

This was no time for communicating the good news; and as advice became indispensibly necessary, I waited on my worthy school-master, and in a few words, painted my situation. Mr. Crane did all in his power to comfort me; he waited on the different tradesmen, and promised, in my name, to discharge the whole of my father's debts, with interest, when I arrived at the age of twenty-one, or sooner if my guardian would permit.

This proposal was agreed to, and, in the space of a month, this good clergyman, was empowered by Sir T—— to pay the whole, for which purpose he remitted three hundred pounds—an act of unheard-of kindness, for had I died during my minority, he would have had the whole to refund.

In the morning, I made our good fortune, and the advice of Mr. Crane, the topic of conversation, and was pleased to find this doubly-afflicted parent inclined to follow it——‘Very true, Sam—the parson’s right—if we can’t stay here, we must go elsewhere. Poor Mary! she’s gone! I wish I was with her—you would do better by yourself—I shall only be a plague to you. D—n this tea! reach me the brandy bottle.’

Mr. Crane’s advice was, to shut up the house as soon as the funeral was over, and take my father to his relations at Clifton, in Lancashire. This plan was minutely adopted, and my arrival at Mr. K——’s greeted with smiles and good humour.

It will be remembered, that an inclination for theatricals was one of my early and predominant propensities. At this time an itinerant company of comedians pitched their tent in the village, laid siege to a barn, and in a few days rendered it (as per bill) fit for the reception of the *nobility* and *gentry* of Saddleworth. ‘This was a glorious incident; now, or never, to exhibit my wonderful talents; to astonish, to electrify, the object of my choice by my superior attainments!——Aye, aye, ‘The play’s the thing, in which I’ll catch the’——affections of Miss K——; at any rate, I can surprise the *nobility* and *gentry* of Saddleworth. Full of this idea, I waited on the manager. From the style in which Mr. Austin, the Chester manager, lived, (the only one I had the most remote knowledge of) I expected at least to be shewn into a decent drawing room. Judge, then, my surprise, when, entering a huckster’s shop, I was directed up three pair of stairs, or rather two, for the last was a ladder, into a garret, furnished in the following manner: In one corner stood an unmade bed, without curtains, from under which a certain utensil made its appearance, and seemed to serve for various purposes; two chairs without backs;

one armed chair complete, over which was thrown a gauze petticoat ornamented with gold leather, worn on the preceding night in *Queen Catherine*, by the Lady Manageress, and who was now condescending to act the washerwoman. In a remote corner of the room, and near the window, stood the great man himself, not in buff, though nearly so—without coat or waistcoat. He wore a garment that once bore the name of shirt, and still gave that idea, from the dirty ruffles that hung over his still more dirty hands; black velvet small clothes, somewhat rusty; no stockings, but old red morocco slippers, bound with tarnished gold. The printing press stood by him, at which he plied with such skill and industry, that I thought it almost a pity to interrupt him. As neither the manager nor his lady had observed my entrance, I stood for some moments contemplating this strange scene. If this be the master's employment, thought I, what must the servants be doing?

I now accosted him, and after apologising for his dishabille, he entered into conversation, with a degree of wit and spirit, neither his appearance nor circumstances seemed to warrant.

'You see, sir, though an actor, I am a *holly-man*—pointing to his shirt. 'Permit me to pun upon my poverty. We players are a set of merry, undone dogs, and though we often want the means of *life*, we are seldom without the means of *mirth*. We are philosophers, sir, and laugh at misfortune; even the ridiculous situations, we are sometimes placed in, are more generally the cause of *mirth* than *misery*. Here you see *Alexander* turned *pressman*, and *Statira* up to the elbows in *suds*.'

With these kind of lively sallies, he continued to amuse me, for some time, still attending to his press, and taking off bills with as much alacrity as if brought up to the business.

Having introduced the subject I came upon, en-

larged upon my abilities, and stated the great attraction my acting would have—‘And so, sir, you mean to shine forth like a blazing star, no doubt, and we poor actors, shall appear as your satellites’ (still pulling at the press) ‘and pray sir, in what part do you mean to make your debut?’—‘*Jachimo* in *Cymbeline*.’—‘Ha! ha! ha! that brings to my mind *Bill Watson*, the *Gbeltenham manager*; he was once applied to by a silly lad, who had like you, been bit by some mad actor, and was strongly tinged with the spouting mania, to let him play a part; ‘what part, says, *Watson*, would you wish to play?’ ‘*Jack Chimo*, in *Cymbeline*, sir.’—‘Hum’ says *Watson*, flirting his finger, a way he had when he wished to be comical, ‘my dear fellow I wish to indulge you if possible, but that part is in possession of a favourite actor who will not willingly give it up; however you may if you please play *Bill Chimo*, his brother, in the same piece. Ha! ha! ha!’ I joined in the laugh, though I did not altogether relish his placing me upon a level with the silly spouter. ‘Sir, your request shall be complied with, the play is up, my wife is a very capital *Imogen*—I do *Posthumous*, and my two sons who are now delivering out the bills, play *Belarius* and the *King*; so you see all the principal parts are ready, except *Cloten*, which is a *double*, you know, Sir, with *Imogen*.’ ‘Excuse me, Sir, if I confess my ignorance of your theatrical terms, what do you mean by *double*?’ ‘Why, sir, when the company is *thin*, and one actor is obliged to do *two* parts, we call that a *double*, so, as I was saying, my wife doubles *Cloten* with *Imogen*.’ Seeing me smile, he added, ‘she is, I assure you, a very fine *Breeches figure*. And now, sir, how would you wish to be announced? the part of *Jachimo*, in large letters, by a young gentleman, being his first appearance on any stage; will that do sir?’ ‘Perfectly.’

Preliminaries thus settled, I took my leave of this merry son of Thespis and his wife.

On my way home, I reflected on the eccentricity of the scene I had just witnessed, and knew not how to assimilate such opposite characters as the printer and player, the tragedy queen and the washerwoman. 'Oh what a falling off was here!' to what I looked for in the life of a player; I was led to suppose, that applause and profit went hand in hand; that those who were so much carressed in the evening, if they did not fare sumptuously the next day, at least enjoyed the necessary comforts of it. My ambition for a truncheon began to cool, however I determined to keep my word with the manager.

The village wakes happened at this period, the unfortunate players were obliged to remove their theatrical apparatus; for as the barn belonged to a public house, it was always in request at this time, for dancing, &c.

Although the families of the K——s visited not such places of rough festivity, they did not withhold the gratification from me; and impelled by curiosity, I determined to be an eye witness of one whole evening's performance.

As I approached the village, which lay near a mile from Mr. K——'s house, I observed the rising hill, which overhung this rural Hamlet, covered with country lads and lasses, in their best attire; all the gaudy colours of the rainbow were here exhibited; as they sat on the grass, each Damon entertained his Phillis with ale, and cakes, and kisses; whilst a blind fiddler, mounted on a three footed stool, rasped away very *seriously* the black *Joke*. On viewing this scene, I observed to a friend who accompanied me, 'now this is as it should be, an innocent relaxation; 'twere hard indeed if the lower classes of society, should be debarred from thus annually enjoying a slight savour of those luxuries, they labour to provide for the great.'

'Could you limit, or restrain these people within

the pale of reason ; could you contract their enjoyments, to this scene *only*, all, as you say, would be very well ; but before the night is over, I fear you will find, all is *not* as it should be ; when the bridle is laid on the neck of the passions, when pleasure knows no restraint, the most cultivated mind will find philosophy scarcely sufficient to prevent its overleaping the bounds of moderation and morality ; of course then, the ignorant and illiterate, who have perhaps neither philosophy nor religion, must be in a dangerous state indeed.'

'In what way then, Mr. Moralizer, would you permit the laborious part of the community to relax ? or rather, would you allow them to relax at all ?'

'Do not think my friend, because I have pointed out the evils that arise from too much liberty, that I am a tyrant ; Oh no ; on the contrary, I rejoice as much as you in the real happiness of my fellow creatures, and wish it were possible to invent some mode of pastime, some relaxation from the fatigues of labour, that would not be attended with the bad consequences of a country wake ; believe me, the sight of yon merry group, enjoying the society of their friends, would give me pleasure, were I not aware by experience, of their fatal tendency.'

'Thus endeth the first lesson ; you would certainly make an excellent parson ;' and in a few years my words were verified ; for this young man married a woman as amiable as himself, turned Moravian, and, though possessed of a large property, *frequently preached*.

We now joined a party of Mr. K——'s men, who, each with his sweetheart, had seated themselves on the grass, overshadowed by a tree—the glass went merrily round, and what with the stimulus of the liquor, the situation, the clumsy jokes of the men, and the sweet smiles of the women, I found my spirits quite elevated ;—not so my friend—his passions

were not easily moved ; indeed, it was always a doubt with me, whether he ever had any ; and I have sometimes observed to him, ‘ that there could be no merit in abstinence, where there was no inclination to sin.’

An accident happened at this moment, which in spite of my companions stoicism, worked his steady muscles into risibility—the poor fiddler had been continually plied from every party with liquor, and at length became so unsteady, that he lost his equilibrium, the stool flew from under his feet, and prostrate he fell on the turf ; this perhaps might have passed unnoticed, had not the noise made by the crash of his instrument, drawn our attention : when the laugh subsided, it became a matter of debate how to make up his loss ; a hat was soon circulated, and in a few minutes poor Crowdero was in possession of three times the worth of his greasy violin.

The retreating sun began to hide its cheering rays behind the broom-covered hills of Yorkshire, when the village clock chimed eight——my moral friend, leisurely drawing out his watch, bade me good night ; ‘ ’tis within half an hour’ said he, ‘ of the time I promised my father to be at home, and you know, friend Romney, a promise to a parent, with me, is sacred.’

As he, with pace as moderate as his passions, perambulated the foot path, and slowly crossed the stile, I followed him with my eye, and wished that Providence had formed my mind upon the model of his.

The sun was now obscured, and the gay throng began their retreat towards the village ; as I mechanically took the same direction, I heard the barking of many dogs, mixed with the voices of men in loud contention, with, ever and anon, the dreadful roaring of a bull ; as this, I understood, was the conclusion of the *last bull bait*, I mended my pace, determined to be an eye witness of this amusement, of which I had heard much ; I soon found myself in the midst of the throng, and beheld a scene of cruelty which beggars

description. This, it seems, was the third time the poor animal had been dragged to the stake that day; about fifty or sixty brutal Yorkshiremen, with each an enormous club, formed the circle; tied to the stake by a strong rope of about ten yards, this once lordly animal, kept at bay, as well as his exhausted strength would permit, the *ferocious bull dog*, and still more *savage man*:—every roar of anguish extorted from this creature by the bite of dogs, or the blows of men, produced a joyous exclamation from the surrounding multitude; and whilst the dogs were employed on the nose, one of the brutes, I cannot call them men, seized his tail, and twisted it, till it broke in pieces, whilst others beat him on the sides with their clubs. At length the wretches allowed a pause of cruelty, the poor bull, with nose lacerated, and hanging in various pieces, attempted to stop the streams of blood, by extending his tongue towards the sores; at this instant, a dog stole unperceived under his belly, and seizing his tongue, bit off a part, and gave him such exquisite torture, and at the same time, produced an horrid yell, that froze the blood in my veins, and I left the place, wondering at the forbearance of the *Deity*, in not consigning to immediate destruction, a set of barbarous wretches, disgraceful to humanity.

Yet this abominable custom, this disgrace to the country, we are very seriously told by a *wise legislator*, is of service to society, and *cannot be done without*.

*O tempora!! O mores!!*

From this scene of human depravity, I fled as from a pestilence, determined to return home, and never more visit a country wake. Passing a public house at the extremity of the village, from whence the din of discord, was frequently interrupted by the horrid scraping of the old blind fiddler, who it seems had patched up his instrument, I was induced to call in, flattering myself that the fire side would be rendered sacred, by the presence of females, who generally com-



mand some degree of respect, even from the worst of men. And as every room in the house was crowded with customers of both sexes, I thought my feelings pretty secure from such terrible attacks as I had just experienced. With these ideas I entered the house, and with difficulty procured a seat; the confusion of voices reminded me of the Tower of Babel: women half tipsey, and men wholly so, roaring out abominable songs, or dancing in the most awkward manner to the melody of '*Nancy Dawson*.' At length the company were summoned into the barn, to witness a battle between two noted Yorkshire fighters. 'To what base uses may we not return.' This was the manager's barn, the identical barn in which my dawning abilities were to shine forth with meridian splendour. What a scene presented itself! not '*The School of Reform*,' but '*The Devil to Pay*.' Amidst the crowd, I perceived two men naked to their waists, lying on the ground, grappling each other, perfectly silent, and sometimes pretty still; then, as if moved by one impulse, a desperate scuffle took place; soon, however, the one extricated himself, quickly obtained his legs, and retreating some paces, returned with great violence, and before his antagonist could rise, kicked in three of his ribs; the vanquished lay prostrate, whilst the victor stamped, and roared like a madman, challenging all around. Retiring to my seat in the house, disgusted with *Yorkshire fighting*, I determined to finish my wine, and leave the brutes to the enjoyment of their brutality, when a laughable circumstance detained me, and in some measure, made amends for the misery I had suffered. There is, I believe, a respectable personage, who, amongst amateurs in sporting, bears the appellation of a Belward, a gentleman, who gets his livelihood by leading a bear by the nose, from village to village; such an one now arrived at this public house, and, placing his companion in the pigstye, seated himself by the

fire, and called for a pint of ale. The Yorkshire warrior, elated with his victory, and intoxicated with liquor, went from room to room, and bid defiance to every one; on entering the kitchen, he espied the Belward, who being a stout fellow, and a noted pugilist, was immediately requested to take a turn with him?—‘No no,’ replied the stranger, ‘I don’t like Yorkshire fighting; hugging, biting, and kicking, does not suit me; but I have a friend without, who is used to them there things; if you like I’ll fetch him in.’ ‘Aye, aye, *dom* him, *fat* him in, I’ll fight *ony mon* ith’ country.’ The Belward repaired to the pigstye, and brought forth Bruin, who, from a large sized quadruped, was changed instantly to a most tremendous biped. In this erect posture, he entered the house, and as it was now nearly dark, the intoxicated countryman was the more easily imposed upon——‘*Dom* thee,’ he said, ‘I’ll fight a better *mon nor* thee, either *up* or *down*,’ and made an attempt to seize him round the middle, but feeling the roughness of his hide, he exclaimed—‘come come, I’ll *tak* no advantage, *poo* off thy top coat, and I’ll fight thee for a crown.’

The bear, not regarding this request, gave him such a hug as ’tis probable he never before experienced, it nearly pressed the breath out of his body, and proved, what was before doubted, that there was as great a bear in the village as *himself*.

## CHAPTER V.

## "A BOLD STROKE FOR A WIFE."

FARQUHAR.

"An old man broken with the storms of war,  
 "Is come to lay his weary bones among ye;  
 "Give him a little earth for charity!"

*Henry the Eighth.*

"I swear to thee by Cupid's strongest bow,  
 "In that same place thou hast appointed me,  
 "To-morrow truly will I meet thee."

*Midsummer Night's Dream.*

LOVE SCENES form the principal part of modern novels; romantic descriptions of that nature, serve to swell the pages of a fictitious story, but in the relation of facts, abounding with incidents, numerous and singular, these auxiliaries are unnecessary, and by being slightly passed over, the sensible reader will be saved the mortification of wading through countless pages of sighs, groans, delicate embarrassments, blushes and silly circumstances, and situations, that lovers like to read about, and some authors, to dwell upon; for my own part, I frankly acknowledge, 'it suiteth me not;' my juvenile readers must pardon me, if I endeavour to compress this part of my life, into as

small a compass as the necessary connection, and thread of the story will permit.

The manager was soon reinstated in his barn, and plays and farces were exhibited, in a style never before seen in Saddleworth—or perhaps any where else.

One evening, I accompanied Mr. K. and his family, to see the play of ‘Hamlet.’ The manager presided at the receipt of custom, and, that no time might be lost, he was armed cap à pée for the representative of the ‘Royal Dane.’ The play was performed, according to my slender judgment, very well, with the exception of a few *doubles*, as the manager called them, and some deficiency in costume: during the fight between Hamlet and Laertes, some young men stood up, when a French dancing master, who made a weekly visit to the village, rose, and made the following speech—‘If de gentilhomme vill sitty down, he no hinder de lady for to see.’—This caused an universal laugh, to the great discomfiture of the tragedians, amidst which, down dropped the curtain.

In the morning I called upon the manager, and found him, in point of appearance, greatly improved; a very decent great coat closely buttoned, and a fierce cocked hat with a gold button and loop, gave him a truly managerial appearance. After the usual compliments, we proceeded to business.

‘Well, sir, what night do you mean to make your appearance? suppose we say Friday?’

‘On Friday, sir, I have no objection to perform Jachimo.’

‘Your friends of course will come—there will be a good house, that will answer *my* purpose—you will be applauded to the skies, that will answer *yours*.’

‘The approbation of one’s friends is certainly very grateful, but if my abilities deserve it, I should look for, and expect *unprejudiced* applause.’

‘Unprejudiced applause! ha! ha! ha! my dear

Sir there is no such thing; once I thought, like you, that applause followed merit, but experience has convinced me to the contrary; I'll give you an instance now; you saw the play last night, and heard the thundering applause given to that young coxcomb, in *Hamlet*; do you know Sir, I have played the part for *forty years* in this circuit, and now, they give the preference to a silly lad of *eighteen*. Pray, Sir, did you ever see *my Richard*?' 'No, Sir, I have not had the pleasure of seeing any of your children.' 'Ha! ha! ha! you don't comprehend, 'tis our way of speaking, when we wish to name a part we have played; now Sir, *my Richard* is supposed to be as pretty a piece of acting, as ever was exhibited between *trap* and *lamp*; and *Ned Shuter*, you have heard of *Ned*, said so, when he came *across* us at the end of the *last town*.'

Not exactly comprehending his words, nor wishing to excite his mirth by any further inquiry, I departed, and on my way home, met my serious friend; I had not seen him since the wake, and though his temperament and habits were totally opposite to mine, yet I liked his company; he was an agreeable monitor, who softened the asperity of reproof, by the mildness with which it was delivered. We left the path to recline upon a bank, and I opened my mind with the greatest freedom; repeated what had passed since we met before, and concluded with my design to perform in the theatre. 'My good friend,' said he, 'suffer me to ask, what you propose to yourself, from such an exhibition? Profit you look not for, is it then popularity you seek? Alas! what avails it when obtained? To be the idol of 'a set of giddy creatures seated at a play,' who care not for the object of their admiration, beyond the period of his performance ——'

'Softly, my grave Sir, you proceed too fast, you do not suppose I mean to make the stage my profes-

sion, and why should a little harmless attempt to amuse a few friends, be attacked so seriously? Make allowance for our different habits, propensities, and genius; 'plays delight not you, nor players either, yet both may be delightful.'

'You mistake, I can very easily make allowance for these things, but if providence, in the plenitude of its wisdom, has thought fit to bestow on me a degree of thought, and prudence, not usual at my age, and which you attribute, to want of energy, and lack of soul, as you call it; it would be miserly to hide my talent under a bushel, and not diffuse a little of that amongst my friends, which daily experience convinces me, they stand so much in need of? I perceive you smile at my arrogance, but, seriously speaking, I very much wish to dissuade you from this strange, and I think imprudent frolic. What have you to do with players? mind your business; if you live, you will have a handsome fortune; by honest industry, endeavour to improve it, become an useful member of society, and a credit to your friends. If, on the contrary, you continue to fan that theatrical fire, which I plainly perceive burns in your veins, I tremble for the consequences.'

My friend's reasoning made a deep impression on my mind, though pride would not allow me to acknowledge it; I endeavoured to laugh away his seriousness, by observing, 'that this fine discourse would do very well from the pulpit, where only one side of the question was heard, but would prove merely sophistical when properly examined; now, though I may not altogether allow, that you are favoured with this plenitude of wisdom and prudence; yet, granting this, can I be blamed, for not using what I never, according to your account, possessed? We might as well punish a cripple for not using his legs, or blame you for not turning actor, who have no talent; whilst I should be still more

blameable, who *have* the talent, to hide it under a bushel—there, now, is an answer in your own pompous language.'

As we reclined on a bank, close by the pathway, an old soldier, whose silver hair, and cleanly appearance, commanded respect, and who had lost a leg and an eye in the service of his country, limped along, and as he passed, requested our honours would bestow a copper, to purchase tobacco; with an irresistible impulse, I dropped my last sixpence into his hat, whilst my prudent friend, whose father presided as head of the parish, examined the veteran on points of parochial import. 'Why did he beg? the laws of this country made ample provision for the poor; and for the disabled soldier, a pension might be obtained by proper application.' 'Why, I'll tell your honours. As to Chelsea, I've got that; but seven pounds a year won't go far now a days; and as to the parish, damme if I ever trouble it again. That is the place,' looking back at the village, whilst the tear stood in his eye, 'which gave me birth; with an intention to end my days there, about a month since, I took a garret, and said to myself, 'Jerome, thou may'st rest thy old bones, for with the assistance of a trifle from the parish, thy small remnant of life will pass in comfort.' But, gemmen, I was reckoning without my host; the heart of a parish officer, is as hard as the butt end of a musket. They've killed poor Bibo, and old Jerome's turned out to beg his bread.'

The old soldier seemed much agitated in uttering the last sentence, and as we were at a loss to understand what was meant by 'killing Bibo,' I requested him to be more explicit.—'Why thus it is your honours—it's damn'd foolish for an old soldier to stand whimpering like a woman, but when I think of Bibo, though he was but a brute, and had not a soul to be saved, I can't help chuckling. I believe

there's one quid left in the corner of my box'—saying this, he crammed the tobacco into his mouth, wiped his eye, squirted out a quantity of saliva, and proceeded.—‘twenty-four years I served under the brave Captain Howard, in the 5th regiment of foot, and a better gemman—God rest his soul—never lived—the last six years of his life, he took me into his house as a kind of *valedy sham* ; he had no family except Bibo, a Newfoundland dog, which he loved like a child ; for when the noble captain served abroad, he once fell overboard, and Bibo saved his life. His honour was not very rich, he was too generous to be rich, it was as much as he could do to make both ends meet ; however, he took care to keep Bibo as fat as a pig ; and I've often heard him say, if he died first, he'd leave Bibo a fortune ; but Lord help him, he had no fortune to leave, for when he lay on his death-bed, he ordered me to sell his gold watch to buy nourishment. ‘Jerome,’ said he, ‘take care of my dog, the life that he once saved, I am going to resign into the hands of him that made us both.’ He soon after died, and Bibo was left to my care. I had some regard gemmen, you will think, for the poor animal, for you know the old saying, ‘love me, love my dog,’ and though I had nothing left but my pension, I thought if I retired to my own village, I might be able to live, as I said before, with a little help from the parish ; so after the funeral, I set off with Bibo at my heels, determined to beg as soon as my money was done, which could not last long, being only a new crown piece, the captain gave me, and sixpenny-worth of copper, to travel seventy miles. Perhaps, gemmen, you are tired—I'd better be hobbling on—it will do *you* no good to *bear my story*, and it grieves *me* to *tell it*.’

We assured him we were much interested, and begged he would proceed. ‘Well then, thus it is—but if you please I'll sit down, because you know



your honours, when a man has but one leg, he can't stand so well as if he had two! Ah I shall never forget the day I lost the fellow to this; it was taken off by a shot at Bunker's Hill.—As I lay on the ground, the captain passing by me as he left the field, (for you see our forces were on the retreat, and it was as much as his life was worth to stay a minute) got me by the hand, and said, 'Jerome, God bless thee,'—and may God bless *him*—and he *will* bless him too; for I can tell your honours——'

We now reminded him, that in his affection for his master, he seemed to have forgotten the sequel of Bibo. 'Very true, very true'—running his finger round the bottom of his empty box, in hopes of finding another quid—'very true, I had got a little out of the road to be sure, Bunker's Hill is not the way to Saddleworth. Well then gemmen, thus it is—Old Jerome hobbled on pretty stoutly, and Bibo waddled after, at the rate of about one mile an hour; to make short of my story—the crown piece lasted till we reached Manchester—there I began to beg for the first time—but I can't tell how it was—whether, not being used to the *trade*, I set about it *clumsily*, I don't know, but—no one would give me a farthing. It's very hard thought I, that an old soldier, who has lost a leg and an eye in defence of his country, should find no one willing to give him a trifle, to help him on the road—at length an old lady approached, and was in the act of presenting something, when Bibo caught her eye—she asked 'whose dog he was?' 'mine, an' please your ladyship'—'indeed!' said she, drawing her hand away, 'if you can afford to keep a dog, you can't want my assistance.' 'Poor Bibo!' said I——Bibo heard me, looked up, and wagged his tail—'aye aye, poor fellow! vag away' thought I, 'if I can get thee to my own parish, thou shalt be safely laid up for life. Would you believe it gemmen? I did not get one half-

penny the whole day—some talked of a *pass* ; others threatened the *New Bailey* ; neither Bibbo or myself had tasted food since morning ; night was coming on, no place of shelter appeared ready to receive our weary limbs—as I leaned on my crutch, debating, Bibbo shook himself, as much as to say ‘ Jerome it’s very cold ; when the noise of a new brass collar, the captain bought just before he died, put a thought in my head, that procured us meat, drink, and lodging. That collar, said I to myself, is of no use—better for Bibbo to be without collar, than without meat ; so I took it off, went to a shop, and sold it for fifteen pence, though it had cost five shillings not a month before. With this money I purchased the following articles ; four pennyworth of cheese, a pint of beer, a twopenny straw bed, and threepennyworth of tobacco.’

‘ Refreshed, and praising God for all things, we set off at five o’clock the next morning, and by night reached my native place. Twenty-five years ago, I took on to be a soldier ; during that time, nearly all my friends were dead ; those who remained, not knowing me, would render me no assistance, except a night’s lodging, and advised an immediate application to the parish. Seeing how matters were, I waited on the *commanding officer*, and made known my situation. Says I ‘ Your Honor’—for I thought I’d honour him, though he was but a tailor—so, ‘ Your Honor,’ says I, ‘ my name’s Jeromy Antrobus ; my father was sexton of this parish for forty years ; I’ve been twenty-five years in the army ; lost a leg and an eye, as you see ; and am laid by as useless, with a pension of seven pounds a year ; but that, you know, is not enough to keep soul and body together ; so I’ve come to Your Honor for a little relief, to help out with.’ Now it rained very hard, gemmen, and standing with my hat off, almost bald, as you see, I asked leave to walk in ; for he peeped out at a little

wicket casement, which, I am told, goes by the name of the *Devil's Picture-frame* amongst the poor.—However, I was not admitted; but he held out his hand, and dropped into my hat eighteen pennyworth of bad copper, saying, ‘he knew nothing about me, but would call at my quarters.’ I am told, he makes a pretty penny of these bad halfpence; for he buys them in, at ten shillings in the pound, and makes the poor take them for their full value.

‘Next day, this d—n’d tailor called; God forgive me, I can’t help swearing when I think of him; the curse of the poor will follow him to the grave—I say, gemmen, he came to my quarters, and the churchwarden with him. I had just breakfasted on three parts of a basin of milk and bread, and Bibo was eating up the fourth, when the tailor, as stiff as buckram, came into the cellar. As soon as he saw the dog, he exclaimed, ‘What! a pauper keep a dog at the expense of the parish!’ With these words, he up with his stick, and gave the poor brute such a blow under the ear, that down he dropped, and never rose again.

‘You may think, gemmen, an old soldier would not sit long quiet in a situation of this kind; so I made shift to shoulder my stick, and with the first volley, *brought down* the tailor’s hat and wig; but before I could rally my *forces* for another *attack*, they beat a *retreat*; and it would have done your hearts good, to have heard the churchwarden, and the overseer calling for assistance, against a poor cripple, who had but one leg to stand upon. A mob was soon collected, who, being properly informed how matters stood, cursed the hard-hearted village tyrant—made a grave for my poor Bibo, which I soaked with my tears—and am now, as you see, tracing my weary way back to Manchester.’

The veteran drew his hand across his eyes, rose up, and prepared for his departure. My friend rose

at the same time——‘Stop, honest Jerome!—perhaps we may have it in our power to serve you; all overseers are not cursed with the disposition of neighbour Staytape.’ By this time, my companion had torn a leaf out of his pocket-book, and hastily sketched a few lines with a pencil.

‘About a mile hence, at the foot of yonder hill, you see a white house; take this note as directed, and in an hour I shall be there myself.’

The old soldier placed the note in his empty tobacco-box, and, with ‘God bless your Honors,’ slowly hobbled on his way.

After a pause, my friend William said, with a sigh, ‘Here is another proof of the depravity of human nature. I believe this poor man’s story; for I know the tailor well—he is a wretch! Constant in all the *outward forms of religion*, he turns over the leaves of his prayer-book, and is louder than any of the congregation in vociferating its contents; yet, the first of all Christian virtues, *Charity*, he is as much a stranger to, as if he had never heard the name.’

‘Aye, and I dare say, this church-going rascal, this shouter of *collects*, *creeds*, and *responses*, would think it a less sin to starve the poor, than visit a play-house!’

My friend smiled, and took me by the hand—‘This play-house is the first object of your thoughts; but, I hope and trust, it will, ere long, be supplanted by others of more utility to society at large—of more heartfelt satisfaction to yourself. Farewell—I have a little business in the village, and shall then follow the old soldier.’

‘Ere I proceed to shew the effect my youthful monitor’s reasoning had upon my mind, it may be as well to finish the history of old Jerome, which, to the honour of his benefactor, I shall do in a few words. After an ample supply of meat, drink, and

comfortable clothing, he was placed in a poor, but respectable family, where, with his pay, and a liberal supply from the parish, obtained through the influence of his friend, he passed the remainder of his days in peace and comfort; fighting over his battles, and describing foreign countries, to the great amusement and edification of his gaping hearers.

William's arguments carried conviction—No!—not exactly conviction; my mind was still unconvinced, but they were persuasive—my fervour for acting began to abate; in short, I gave up the idea, and when I got home, penned an apology to the manager.

I shall pass over nearly a year and a half, during which, nothing occurred, either interesting or uncommon, except the death of Mr. K——, my respected master; but as the business was carried on by his widow and eldest son, who was called from school on the occasion, my situation continued the same.

Behold me now, in my twentieth year, up to the heart in love, and very ignorant of the business I was bound to learn, added to which my irregularity and dissipation were become proverbial; Miss K. was cautioned to keep me at a distance, but that was impossible; arduous, enthusiastic, and watchful as the lynx, I lost no opportunity of enforcing my passion, which at length was favourably received; hurried on by the warmth of my imagination, I pressed my suit, and in my twentieth year prevailed on Miss K. aged sixteen, to accompany me to Gretna Green, attended by a female friend, and my fellow apprentice, who, about ten years afterwards, were themselves united in the bands of Hymen. The officiating priest was, both in person and manner, vulgar in the extreme. He is generally represented as a blacksmith, whether that is really his calling I know not, but as a specimen of his literary talents I subjoin

the certificate he presented to us, after receiving six guineas and a half for the *job* as he emphatically called it.

*North Bretton Graitney Green Sept. 15, 1776.*

These are to *Certifie* all Persons that may *Concern*, that Samuel William R—— and Ann K—— both in the County of *Yorkshire* Who Came Before me, declaring themselves both Single *Parsons*, and *Was* Lawfully Married By the way of the Church of England and Agreeable to the Laws of the *Kirk* of Scotland *gaven* under my Hand Date above *menchend*.

THOMAS BROWN  
SAM WM R——  
ANN K——

Witness JOHN WOOD }  
ROBT STOTEN } Postillions.

## CHAPTER VI.

## "THE HONEY MOON."

TOBIN.

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"What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason!  
 How infinite in faculties! in form and moving,  
 How express and admirable!"

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HAMLET.

THUS made man and wife, agreeable to the laws of the Kirk of *Scotland*, we hastened back to the Bush, at Carlisle, to enjoy a good dinner, according to the manner of the *Inns of England*; to which we were sitting down, when the waiter brought a gentleman's compliments, just arrived from Edinburgh, there being no other company in the house, requested permission to join our party. Young, and inexperienced, we thought ourselves honoured by the request; and were still more convinced of this, when the stranger made his appearance, which was highly prepossessing; he stood nearly six feet high; robust, yet of excellent symmetry; his features expressive of strong sense, and great animation; his address singularly courteous, and the tones of his voice created an interest, I have never since experienced; his dress was fashionable, without foppery, though his hair wore an appearance, at that time of day peculiarly

singular ; the usual style was a toupee, curls, cue, and powder ; but his jet black hair, bore its natural hue, was tied close to the head with a narrow ribbon, and fell in ringlets down his back.

I have been thus minute in my description, because this singular character will be occasionally brought forward, I hope with some interest.

At his entrance, we all rose, he bowed gracefully. ‘May I hope to obtain pardon from this good company, for the liberty I have taken ? Man is formed for society ; he is miserable without it, and *that* society is rendered doubly valuable, when sanctioned and enlivened,’ bowing to the ladies, as he took his seat, ‘by the more lovely part of the creation.’

When the cloth was drawn, he circulated the glass with an address, I had never before witnessed ; and conversed with a fluency upon various topics, that filled me with astonishment ; he spoke several of the modern languages, conversed upon history, and politics, as if he had made them his study ; then turned the discourse to Shakespeare, and other contemporary writers ; in short, he seemed to be equally acquainted with plays and players ; the heroes of former times, and the great men of the present day. He informed us, ‘his name was Camelford, and that he was just returned from Scotland.’

After passing a few pleasant hours, he suddenly arose, looked at his watch, and exclaimed, ‘I fear I am too late’—then ordered the dinner bill, of which he insisted upon paying one third, for which purpose he took from his pocket book a ten pound note, and requested me to favour him with the difference.

Proud of accommodating so great a man, and perhaps not less proud of shewing him the strength of my purse, I readily complied, when shaking my hand with uncommon energy he said, ‘this is not the *last* time we shall meet, you have done me a greater *favour* than you are *aware* of, and have se-



cured a *friend* who both *can* and *will* serve you.' Then bowing to the ladies, he precipitately left the room.

For a few moments my feelings were up in arms, as well as my curiosity; I reflected on his parting words, and his agitation whilst he pronounced them; what great obligation could there be in cashing a bill, that should secure me a *friend* both *able* and *willing* to *serve* me? Upon the whole, there appeared a *mystery* in the business, above my comprehension to fathom.

The next day after breakfast, I sent Mr. Camelford's note to discharge the bill, but guess my surprise, when the waiter returned it as *valueless*.

On looking over it, (I confess for the first time, for when I received it, my confidence in the man was so *great*, and my knowledge of the world so *little*, that I was completely satisfied, by only observing the sum of 10*l.* at the top of the bill, and the name of Charles Camelford at the bottom) I now found the form ran thus.

£10 0 0.

Glasgow, Sept. 12th, 1776.

Three months after date, I promise to pay the sum of 10*l.* to the person who has confidence enough in me to exchange this note, and to stand his friend, though at the utmost hazard of my life, whenever circumstances demand it.

CHARLES CAMELFORD.

Here was an incident! I was struck speechless with astonishment at the man's depravity, and felt ashamed to have been so easily duped. I paced the room at the rate of six miles an hour; rang the bell; summoned the master, mistress, and servants; but

from no one could I gather the least information—he was a perfect stranger, had come in the coach from Scotland, without any luggage, and walked out of the house, the moment he left the dining parlour.

There was no recalling the past; I examined the state of my finances, and found them barely sufficient to take us into Lancashire, without deviating from the common track, which, in other circumstances, had been my intention.

Behold us, then, comfortably seated in a small village, called Clifton, near Preston, in Lancashire, at which place I had before placed my father, and where we intended to remain till a second and more binding marriage had united us, and until my wife's friends were reconciled to their run-away girl.

A circumstance occurred at our second wedding, which I cannot omit relating, because it does honour to the principles of a party concerned. When the sacred rites were finished I put into the hands of the clergyman (now vicar of Preston) a pair of gloves folded up in paper; in one of the fingers I had previously placed a guinea—these said gloves lay unheeded in a drawer amongst a variety of others, till a stated period, when they were to be exchanged for gloves of a more wearable texture; which was done accordingly without inspection.

But the vicar had scarcely reached his home, 'ere the mistress of the shop brought him the guinea so curiously concealed; which I think was a *rare* proof of *honesty*. Several years afterwards, this worthy clergyman and myself talked the business over, and an explanation took place as above.

## CHAPTER VII.

## "THE ROAD TO RUIN."

HOLCROFT.

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"Our history shall with full mouth  
Speak freely of our acts."

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Henry V.

AT the conclusion of my minority, I met Sir T—— H——, by appointment, in London, who gave me possession of my fortune, and expressed a wish to see Mrs. R—— and self, in Lincoln's Inn Fields, the following spring, which invitation we accepted, and were treated with every mark of respect and hospitality, both by him and his lady.

We now commenced house-keeping, and set off in great style ; indeed much greater than my fortune could at all sanction. I had always a passion for *driving*, now was the time to indulge it ; a one horse gig had its *comforts*, but then there was no *dash*—besides any one could drive a single horse—*my* ambition soared to a *pair*, which, harnessed to a lofty phaeton, would draw the attention of the gazers. My wife voted for the gig, which would be both convenient, and better suited to our circumstances. Her arguments, though *sound*, were not *effective*, and an elegant carriage was bespoke. One extravagance

leads to another; 'twould be out of all character, to drive such an equipage without a servant to follow it; he must also have a horse—but by way of *economy*, I purchased one that occasionally served me for a hunter.

Thus established, we lived for about five years in style; that is, we visited and received company; drove about from one gay place to another, till the banker, in whose hands my money was lodged, wrote me a very alarming letter.

Young and inexperienced, we had an idea, that *four thousand pounds* would never have an end; but alas! the fatal truth burst upon us like a thunderbolt; our visionary schemes of happiness were fled, never to be recalled, and poverty, grim poverty! stood staring in our faces.

I possessed a small estate in right of my wife, which brought in 50*l.* a year: this was all we had now to look forward to; our gay establishment must be disposed of. Farewell 'the neighing steed!' the lofty phaeton!—Farewell our grand connexions! some sequestered nook must be found to shelter our poverty, and hide us from the world. In search of such a place, I made a pedestrian tour into Westmoreland, a fishing rod in my hand, and two faithful pointers at my heels.

Arrived at the lake of Windermere, I found a spot apt for my purpose, and without reflection took it. The nominal rent was only *three pounds* per annum, which had to be sure a very *cheap sound*, but I was obliged to lay out at least 50*l.* before it was at all *habitable*, and as we continued there only *nine months*, it will appear, we could have had the *best house* in the neighbourhood of the lakes, for less money. But let me not anticipate.

I returned home in great spirits, charmed my little wife with a description of *Westmoreland*—dwelt with rapture on '*Love in a Cottage*'—animadverted on the

*cheapness of our habitation—on the plentifulness of every article necessary to our comfort—in short, I was eloquent, even to redundancy; and almost persuaded Mrs. R——, that fifty pounds per annum, at Newby Bridge, was fully adequate to all our wants.*

## CHAPTER VIII.

## "THE POOR GENTLEMAN."

COLMAN.

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"How use doth breed a habit in a Man!  
 This shadowy desert, unfrequented woods,  
 I better brook, than flourishing peopled Towns."

*Two Gentlemen of Verona.*

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IN the month of April, 1782, we took possession of our cottage on the banks of the beautiful Serpentine River which terminates the Lake Windermere. It requires the pen of Mrs. Radcliffe to do justice to the scenery in this delightful region; I confess myself inadequate to the task. The lake is twelve miles long, and two in breadth; the water so amazingly transparent, that at the depth of nine, or ten feet, you see the eels, in graceful curve, gamboling at the bottom, which bears the appearance of a fine, newly cut, bowling green. The boundaries are thickly planted with trees, interspersed with neat white cottages, and gentlemen's seats; above which appear towering fells, covered with broom. In the centre of the Lake is an Island, of about five and thirty acres, with a very handsome house, built by a Mr. English, who, after laying out ten thousand pounds, was under the necessity of bringing it to the hammer, when the

whole was purchased by Miss Curwen, for, I believe, the small sum of thirteen hundred pounds!

Our neighbours were few and confined to two classes, the rich and the poor; the former, friendly and hospitable—the latter, humble, even to servility.

I passed the mornings in following my favourite pursuits, *shooting* and *fishing*; in the evening we sailed upon the lake, whose glassy surface not a breath of wind ruffled, cast our anchor, and the hours flew imperceptibly, whilst talking over the past, and debating on our future plans; this was diversified, by occasionally taking a book, or a hit at backgammon. When the weather admitted not of these excursions, we beguiled the evenings with music, or a friendly interchange of civility with our neighbours. The walks about Newby Bridge are enchanting; frequently seated in the cool shade of some adjoining wood, we enjoyed the works of a favourite author, whilst the feathered choristers made the valleys echo to their cheerful notes; and I may say with truth, exalted the ideas from the creature to the Creator. —But alas! heavenly as these notes were, and much as they tended to soothe the mind, *other notes* were needful at Newby Bridge: and of these we soon found a woeful deficiency; for though my amusements supplied game and fish, 'twas impossible for people of *our habits* to exist, with a maid servant, five dogs, and 'a harmless necessary cat,' upon fifty pounds per annum.

Near the foot of Newby Bridge, and within a few yards of my cottage, stood an inn, which during the summer months, was much frequented by visitors, making the tour of the Lakes. The landlord, rather an uncommon circumstance, was a *Quaker*, though, according to the vulgar phrase, a *wet one*; and the *spirit* often moved him, to do those things he should *not* have done, to the great annoyance of his wife and the neighbourhood. When much exhibi-

rated, it was his frequent custom to threaten *suicide*. One evening he determined to put it in execution, for which purpose, he walked into the river, up to his chin; his wife, a strong masculine woman, followed, and taking him by the ears, gave him a hearty ducking, exclaiming at the same time, 'thou wilt drown thyself, wilt thou John! verily! I will do my best to cure thee of these megrims.' This had an instantaneous effect, he never afterwards took the *water*, except when qualified by the *spirit*. I was an eye witness of this truly laughable scene, and would recommend the same mode of treatment, to the consideration of the faculty, it would, I am persuaded, prevent many similar acts of lunacy.

One day we were engaged to dine at a gentleman's house, two miles off. It is the hospitable custom in this part of England, to sup where you dine; and the night proving rainy and dark, we were easily prevailed upon to take a bed. The following morning, on entering our little parlour, I perceived a letter on the piano, which, to my inconceivable surprise, ran thus:

'Have I found you at last? with this certainty I inclose a twenty pound bill—it will repay the *pecuniary* part of the obligation conferred on me *seven years* ago at *Carlisle*.—Never will the favour be erased from my mind—and should the time arrive when my services can be useful, doubt not the fulfilment of what I *sacredly promised*, in the paper you gave me cash for ——. I have trespassed on the *allotted time*, but the fault has not lain with me;—had I sooner known your address, the money would have been sent to it—'tis only within a few days I have been able to trace you, and if I mistake not, *this* is the *period* when the enclosure may be *acceptable*. Excuse my frankness, but I know, times are not with you as they *have been*—I am sorry for it—nay heartily—

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but hope, with the loss of *property*, you have bought *experience*.

‘You are a good natured man ’tis said—I am sorry for it—you are not a *fool* I believe—yet, such as are generally styled good natured men are little better; weakness of head often obtains a character for goodness of heart. The wise pity—the crafty make a prey of them. Why sequester yourself and merely vegetate? Go into the world—take an active part—procure what you at present have *not*, a *livelihood*—a cypher in society is contemptible, the mind and body are made for employment—’tis a duty we owe our country and ourselves. Awake from this lethargy—‘take up your bed and walk,’ or poverty will soon run away with it—I preach to *you*, and am *myself* an out-cast—isolated, shut out from society—a wretched being is

‘*Charles Camelford.*’

‘Done in your own little cottage  
this tenth day of August, 1782.’

My astonishment on reading this letter, no language can describe. I questioned the maid respecting the gentleman who had called and written a letter in our absence. I thought she looked confused at the interrogation, but she assured me no person of any description had been seen by her. At length the truth came out—she had locked up the house as soon as our backs were turned, and did not come home till dark. This account added greatly to my amazement; how did Camelford enter the house? indeed, by what agency had he found me out at all? since the money was restored, why not return it in person? There was an air of mystery in the whole transaction, that puzzled and perplexed me—it made me uneasy, though I could not tell wherefore; his knowledge of my circumstances, the advice contained in his letter, all, all, filled me with wonder. Indeed, as he truly observed, ‘this was the period,’ when twenty pounds

were acceptable, for we had at this moment, but one solitary guinea in the house, nor any immediate expectation of receiving a remittance.

'Twas several days 'ere I regained my usual composure—Camelford was our never-ceasing subject by day, and seemed, by some undue influence, to govern even my hours of slumber.

In the beginning of September the pastor of our parish, who, in a similar cottage to mine, 'lived passing well on forty pounds a year,' called to fix the time for a shooting excursion, which had been sometime in agitation, to a place called Low Furness, distant about twelve miles. But as my friend, the curate, is a *character*, it may not be amiss to describe him. His knowledge of the world was contracted, for he had never been twenty miles from home—his mind was uncultivated, for his intelligence consisted entirely of clerical information, which he dealt out with much accuracy: no man was better studied in the list of livings, or the different degrees of preferment; this, and a reverence, even to servility, for his superiors, he seemed to think, the principal, if not the *only* requisites, for a country curate—a foe to reflection, always in spirits, he bore the outward, and visible signs of good living; in short, as Shakespeare says, 'he was one of your round, sleek, fat faced fellows, that sleep o' nights.'

The following day having sent our guns by the carrier, we set off—Don, Fop, and Juno, at our heels. The way lay through a most romantic country, the evening was perfectly serene, and the parson in more than usual spirits; time wore away imperceptibly; we were within a short distance of Furness Abbey, which formerly cut no insignificant figure in monastic history, when we observed, on a sudden turn of the road, a chaise, which appeared stationary, and a man on horseback, who seemed talking to the people within—there might be mischief going forward, this

part of the road was particularly solitary, and well calculated for deeds of darkness. We approached with speed, and found the highwayman, for such he proved, had concealed his features by a piece of black crape. Our appearance gave him no embarrassment, and though we each seized hold of the bridle, he betrayed not the least fear, but in a resolute tone, said, 'Gentlemen, I have done you no injury, but provoke me not; release my horse, or the consequences may be fatal,' then turning to me, in a low voice he said, 'What! Romney turn'd thief catcher at last!' and spurring his horse, burst from our hold, and was invisible in a moment.

After my surprize, at this strange recognition, had in some degree abated, I turned towards the chaise, and beheld two elderly ladies, one of whom broke the silence by saying, 'Gentlemen, both I and lady Mary feel ourselves obliged by your good intentions——.'

As soon as my companion heard the words 'Lady Mary,' he was on her ladyship's side of the carriage in a moment; bowing to the very ground, and exposing his round, bald pate, which bore the appearance of a ripe pumpkin. Lady Mary now took up the discourse, 'We are greatly obliged, though your interference proved useless. The fellow had much the manners of a gentleman, and robbed us according to the rules of politeness.'

'Then he *has* robbed your *ladyships*' said the parson, 'Oh yes, you shall hear the whole process—after completely frightening the postillion; he came up to the door of the carriage, and, in, gentle accents, said —'Ladies, be not alarmed, you shall receive no *personal* injury from me, I only wish to examine a ring on that lady's finger; the application, no doubt appears strange, and from a person of my appearance, alarming, but I once more repeat, you have, no seri-

ous cause for apprehension. I have doubts, I have a curiosity, that must be satisfied at all hazards.'

My friend then gave him her ring, which was both valuable and remarkable. He examined it attentively, and his agitation, at the time, seemed the result of recognition; yet it appears impossible he should ever have seen it before; in short, the whole proceeding is a mystery, time only can elucidate. The man's appearance, independent of the black crape, was genteel, and his manners elegant, and fascinating. He seemed, I thought, anxious to get a view of my companion's countenance, but her veil entirely defeated his curiosity,

'Gentlemen, we will now pursue our journey, and should any accident bring you into South Wales, we shall be happy to shew you every civility in our power; and you will, at the same time, receive the thanks of my *uncle Bishop*.' At the word '*Bishop*' the parson bowed to the very ground.

She then presented her card, and as my friend received it, I thought he would literally have licked the dust to shew his gratitude.

We watched the chaise turn an angle of the road, 'ere Clericus read the card, on which was neatly written, '*Lady Mary Buller, Landaff, South Wales*.' Then, disposing of it with more care than I should a fifty pound note, casting a significant look at me, he exclaimed—

'No mean connection this! something may arise from it! many have risen in the church from a low origin to the highest dignity! The archbishop of C—— was only the son of a butcher!—the late Rev. Father in——' 'Pray my good friend, do not shew such weakness, *you* will never be a Bishop, depend upon it.'

'Who can be certain of that?' taking a book out of his pocket, which he called a *Religious Register*, but which, in fact, was only a list of livings in the gift of

bishops—‘Let me see—’ *Landaff*—‘aye, here it is—no less than five presentations! and who knows, but on a nearer acquaintance, her ladyship may persuade her uncle the bishop to ——’ ‘Pho! pho! I see through your mistake—she said, her ‘uncle *Bishop*,’ not *the* bishop.’

I’ll tell you what, Mr. Romney, few men have a nicer ear, with regard to things relating to the church than I have; and as I was on her *ladyship’s* side of the carriage, when her *ladyship* condescended to speak, there can be little doubt of my being accurate.’

‘True parson, there can be little doubt of your being a *curate*. But my good friend, there is a partiality in gentlemen of your cloth, towards nobility, which I cannot, upon any rational grounds, account for; it cannot be for the love of filthy lucre; the mammon of unrighteousness, with all its deceitful appendages, you abjure; and from the principles of that excellent religion you profess and teach, you are taught to place your affections on things above.’

‘True! but if we, who are entrusted with so momentous, and laborious a concern, do not sustain the flesh, with good wholesome aliment, we should sink under the burthen; for, as Archdeacon Payley very justly observes—is not that a public house? let us adjourn, and settle the point, over a glass of good ale.’ Accordingly we entered, and found the very farmer, to whose house we were going, and whom we attended, to his hospitable roof, where we passed a most comfortable evening. Good cheer and hospitality had an exhilarating effect upon us all; the parson was, in his way, more than commonly loquacious; enveloped in the fumes of tobacco, he amused, or rather confused, the worthy farmer’s family, with Benefices, Bishops, Deans, Rectors, Curates, Prebends, Deacons, Canons, Minor-Canons, and the whole artillery of the Church Militant: in vain, I applied *my* foot to *his* under the table, coughed,

winked, nothing would stop him, till he had given a correct and edifying account, of all the church revenues, from the Archbishopric of Canterbury, down to Soder and Man.

‘Have you finished your devotions, my good friend?’ said I, ‘if you have not, for pity’s sake postpone them, as you sometimes do your sermons, to a future opportunity; and give us a song?’ this had the desired effect, and the song went round till the clock struck eleven.

We arose with the lark, in full spirits, and eager expectation of the coming sport.

Although the amusements of the field are by no means unobjectionable, on the score of humanity, yet, when the mind can conquer its feelings, as it frequently does, either by custom, or a partial mode of reasoning, there are comforts and enjoyments, attendant on the life of a sportsman, which he alone can describe, or when described—comprehend.

“When my pointers around me all carefully stand,  
 “And none dare to move, but the dog I command,  
 “When the covey he springs, and I bring down my bird,  
 “I’ve a pleasure, no pastime besides can afford,  
 “No pleasure, no pastime, that’s under the sun,  
 “Is equal to mine, with my dog and my gun.”

The voluptuary, the indolent, and the dissipated, will pardon this rhapsody; I have mounted my favourite hobby horse, in riding which, I have too often thrown the reins on the neck, and o’er-leaped the bounds of prudence.

## CHAPTER IX.

## "MORE WAYS THAN ONE."

MRS. COWLEY.

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"Swear not to make known what you have heard to-night,  
 Nor by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,  
 Nor by ambiguous givings out, denote  
 That you know aught of me."

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HAMLET.

FROM seven in the morning, till eight at night, we pursued our sport with eagerness and success; but now, sorely pressed by hunger and fatigue, began to calculate the distance from the house of our hospitable host. We were close to the ancient ruins of Furness Abbey, whose high, majestic walls had been untenanted for near a century; it stood proudly solitary, not a human habitation within its *ken*. The evening closed apace; heavy, black clouds appeared at a distance; the wind whistled through the valley; the crows approached the ivy'd walls, with more than usual haste, as if to avoid the coming tempest; and, with their monotonous notes, warned us to do the same.

The dogs at this moment, began to bark, and scratch against the wall, as if to gain admittance; I whistled, but was not attended to; they continued to scratch, and bark, nor could all my efforts draw them

thence ; at length, I approached the place, and perceived, about six feet from the ground, a cavity, though nearly covered with ivy. To discover, if possible, what made the dogs uneasy, I placed a large stone under the dilapidated wall, and mounting thereon, could easily discern through the chasm, what I concluded had formerly been a vault, or burial ground ; for, through the dusk I could perceive human skulls and bones ; a mouldy kind of damp smell assailed my nostrils, and caused a suffocating sensation ; there were the remains of a stained glass window, which emitted too feeble a light for me to ascertain the full extent of this nauseous place, but from the echo of my voice, it appeared large and lofty.

My curiosity was strongly excited to see the interior of this once noble pile ; particularly, as the rain descended in large drops, and the thunder rolled over our heads, in loud and awful peals.

My companion went to the other side in search of an entrance ; in the mean time, I remained stationary, and thought I could discern something move under the painted window ; concluding it was my friend, who had found admittance, I requested him to come under the place where I stood, and discover, if possible, what had caused the alarm amongst the animals. He answered not, but came as I requested. To discover objects more distinctly, I had extended my body as far through the cavity, as I could with safety, and saw something gradually arise towards me, when, within a few inches of my face, I discovered the skull and upper part of a human skeleton !

By the reasoning and discipline of my mother, I had, in early life, been taught to disbelieve in supernatural agency ; the idea of a ghost, never entered my imagination, yet, at the moment I could not help shuddering, and as I shrunk back, exclaimed, ‘ Good God !’



I soon, however, rallied my courage 'to the sticking place,' and concluded it was a trick of the parson; confident of this I stretched out my hand, determined to rattle the bones about his ears; but 'ere I could reach them, they vanished, and I received a blow, that, for the instant, deprived my fingers of motion. More than ever convinced that his reverence was the perpetrator of this act of violence, I descended, fully resolved on an explanation; for this purpose I explored every part of the ruin, but without effect: in vain I called, there was the most profound silence, save the interruption caused by the thunder and rain, which now came down in torrents, and added greatly to the local disagreeableness of the place. Darkness too approached with rapid strides, and I was a stranger to the intricacies of the road, nevertheless it must be attempted; with this view I leaped the adjoining hedge, and whistled my dogs, but no dogs were forthcoming—they had vanished, as well as the parson. This circumstance greatly increased my uneasiness, for if alive and at liberty, they would have answered the well known signal.

How was I to conduct myself? What before was merely surprize, now amounted to alarm, to fears for my safety; for there is a fancied security in the society of these faithful dogs, which I was now deprived of. At any rate, there was mystery surrounding me, if not danger, and I had every reason to suspect the latter; it was indeed nearer than I dreamt of, and approached, in a form the most terrible, even in the form of a *bull*! an *enormous bull*! who grazed within a few yards of me, and whose rage, my whistling and halloaing, had called into action.

With the most hideous roar, he tore up the earth, threw his tail over his back, and with terrific fury, made towards me. My gun was loaded, and when the rain came on, I had carefully wrapped my handkerchief round the lock; this I instantly untied,

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determined to give him the contents of both barrels, if I found it necessary to my safety. The creature was within three yards of me, when I lifted the gun to my shoulder, retreating at the same time, and was in the act of pulling the trigger, when my foot coming in contact with a stone, tripped up my heels; the gun, my only safeguard, flew out of my hand, and left me at the mercy of this merciless animal. In vain I tried to recover my legs, the rain had made the ground slippery, and hope herself was fled.

The horn of the furious brute pierced my jacket, and tore away the skirt, but luckily did no other injury; he was menacing a second attack, which doubtless, would have been effectual, when his attention seemed to be diverted from me, by something immediately behind him; and I was pleasingly surprised, to find myself no longer the object of his notice. He danced, he roared, whilst a stout, brawny, black looking fellow, was belabouring his sides with an ashen cudgel in his right hand, whilst with the left, he held him fast by the tail. Having completely tired himself, and tamed my opponent, he let go his hold, and the lordly tyrant galloped away. By this time I had recovered my legs, and determined to go to the assistance of my deliverer, but found him completely master of the field. As I approached, his appearance, dress, and attitude, filled me with amazement; no opposites were ever more contradictory, for to the person and gestures of an hero, was joined the most squalid wretchedness of attire; it consisted of two waistcoats, the under one of dirty red cloth, with sleeves; the other of rusty black; his lower habiliments were originally of a dark hue, but patched with a variety of colours; his complexion was a dingy olive, and down his back hung a profusion of black hair, tied close to the head with a piece of pack thread: In short, I never saw a more wretched habit, I never saw a more dignified person! Struck

with the commanding air with which he stood to receive me, I scarcely knew in what kind of language to thank him; his dress spoke, as plain as *dress could speak*, that my purse would be acceptable; but his carriage and deportment gave *that* the lie so pointedly, that I was lost in a labyrinth of conjecture.

The commanding air with which he waited my approach, whilst gracefully pointing to my vanquished adversary, kept me silent, which he seemed not inclined to interrupt, but fixed his penetrating eye upon me, as if disposed to read my very soul.

'Friend,' said I at length, 'you have rendered me a singular service; you have in all probability, saved my life; how shall I requite you? will the offer of my purse, which, for your sake, I wish was better filled'—he interrupted me by saying very emphatically—'*Pshaw*—why offer that to *me* you so much want *yourself*?'

I started, the voice was familiar to me, the words were rude—they struck at my pride, they wounded my self consequence. This strange man interrupted my reverie, by retreating a few paces towards the Abbey; he beckoned me to follow, which I slowly did, and never, in my recollection, felt my fears and curiosity so much awake. I had followed him to the very walls of the ruin, when fear, or prudence, got the better of curiosity, and I determined to proceed no further.

'Stop friend!' I exclaimed, in rather a peremptory tone, 'where are you taking me? what is your design? who are you? *you* have *saved* my life, and whilst I have this weapon, *I* will *defend* it.—Answer me—are your intentions honest?' '*Honi soit qui mal y pense*,' said he, and still went on, beckoning me to follow.

This man, thought I, is above the common stamp! he can have no design on my property! *that* he has already refused; and were my death his object, the

bull had full power to inflict it ; then what have I to fear ?

My courage revived, and with undaunted step, I followed him. It was now become so dark I could with difficulty discern my leader, and mending my pace just reached the ruin as my guide rushed through an arch so thickly covered with shrubs that it was impervious to the eye of a stranger. What was now to be done ? to follow him were madness ! I found my resolution relax, and remained immovable. At this moment the following words were pronounced in an audible voice. '*I promised to stand your friend, even at the hazard of my life, whenever circumstances might demand it.*' The very words of Camelford's note!!! was it possible ? the voice—it must be he—I called out 'Camelford !' 'Romney ?' was immediately answered from within. I rushed through the arch and seized the hand of my preserver with as much gladness, gratitude, and sincerity, as though he had been a prince clothed in purple, and this ruinous abbey his palace.

'Still your finger on your lips ; I know you are grateful ; I know you are anxious to learn the reason of this mysterious conduct—but *now* it cannot be, my friends expect me.' 'Indeed ! have you companions then ?' 'Follow me, and I'll convince you ; but first let me lay a solemn injunction on you, not to reveal to any one what you *know* of me, or what from circumstances you may be led to *guess*. I will be your friend, I *am* your friend ; I have preserved your life, but remember, self-preservation is the first law of nature. *My life* may depend on your secrecy—and *yours* will not be safe if you betray my confidence. Were you not a little too precipitate yesterday ? was it prudent to attack a desperate man ?'

It immediately occurred to me, that Camelford was the highwayman. Good heaven ! what a confusion of ideas now crowded on my imagination——

‘Camelford a robber! Camelford in disguise, in concealment! perhaps a murderer!’ my heart sunk within me, and amazement kept me silent. ‘Come on Romney,’ said he, ‘and think not too hardly of me; my life has hitherto been a very unhappy one.’ ‘The next time we meet alone, I will give you some account of my adventures; in the mean time, think on what I have said and be cautious.’

We now proceeded a few yards up the narrow vaulted passage, when I thought I heard the breathing of various people, and, at the same time, fumes of tobacco assailed my nostrils; but what astonished me most, was the barking of my faithful dogs, who pretty loudly signified their knowledge of my approach. ‘Camelford,’ said I, ‘where are we?’ for there was total darkness.

‘That you shall see presently,’ and stamping his foot on the ground, in a moment the place was illumined with at least, a dozen small lanterns, and I beheld a scene that filled me with pleasing astonishment, and made a lasting impression on my mind. I found myself in an arched vault, about the size of a common dining-room. The stone with which it was built bore the appearance of Derbyshire spar, filled with small shining particles, which returned the reflected light, ten thousand fold; on several large stones, of an uneven surface, were spread bread, cheese, onions, cold ham, and eggs, with flasks of strong beer; but the company, twelve in number—oh, heavens! what a motley group—their complexion and habiliments reminded me of Macbeth’s witches. All stood up at my entrance, and I was introduced by the title of ‘*Confido*,’ a term in use amongst them, and signified ‘a person they might trust.’

Camelford smiled at my astonishment. ‘There is,’ said he, ‘a curiosity in this cavern, which will surprise you more than all you have seen.’ I turned my head, but conceive my amazement at beholding

my parson, seated in a niche of the wall, puffing away sorrow in large volumes of smoke, and moistening his clay with a horn of brown stout.

He laughed heartily at my surprise, and giving me a welcome shake by the hand, liberated the dogs, which he had, by desire of Camelford, tied up.

The pleasure of finding my brother sportsman in safety; the prospect of a good wholesome meal, which I stood in great need of, and a retrospect of the disasters the evening had produced, and which were now happily ended, gave an elasticity to my spirits, an exhilaration to my faculties, which I believe, added to the harmony of the group. The place, the people, the oddness of the circumstance which brought me there, the joy of my pointers who played about my legs in never-ceasing gambols, the parson's red nose, Camelford's attention, the beauty of a young girl whom they called Fanny, in short, all these circumstances combined with the strong ale to intoxicate my faculties; and being a little pot-valiant, I determined to ask an explanation of this mysterious scene.

'My copper-faced friend,' said I, 'you have certainly been at the torrid zone, since first I knew you, for you are famously sun-burnt; or, perhaps, you are turned Guinea captain, and these are your ship's crew, for they are all of the same complexion.'

'Friend Romney,' cried the parson, 'what has complexion to do in the business? Do you think, I should dislike a good living, because the congregation were inulattos? 'Clean money may come through dirty hands,' as our Rector says. I look upon this lusty sinner now,' forcibly striking Camelford on the shoulder, 'as a son of the church—perhaps a bishop, and these dingy-faced gentlemen, the clergy of his diocese. 'Tis true, he has not many fat livings in his gift, but he has plenty of fat bacon in his larder; and I'll be bound, the tithes are industri-

ously gathered, as every farm-yard can witness. 'My friend the bishop, too, seems such an enemy to the church of Rome, that, though nothing will ever force him to say, *A mass*, if I judge right'—with an arch look at Fanny, 'he has no objection to say, *Amo*' Although the conclusion of this rhapsody produced a smile, there were some points in it that I knew, could not ~~but~~ be agreeable, and which, had my friend known Camelford as well as I did, perhaps he would not have uttered; but thinking them a set of low, marauding gipseys, he went his lengths, as he called it, without fear of offence.

'When you get upon your *parochials*, parson,' said I, 'there is no stopping you; I simply asked our host, what was the cause of his change of complexion, without expecting your animadversion upon it.'

'I should have expected, Mr. Romney, said Camelford, 'from your age, education, and experience, a little more knowledge of the world; have you never heard of a sect called gipseys? We belong to that body of people; we bear the appellation and the ignominy, and prefer liberty of mind and body, to the tyranny of partial laws and sacerdotal imposition—we despise the opinion of the world as much as we do its customs. The ambitious statesman who would sacrifice his country's welfare for a place or a pension—the *honourable* courtier, who suffers his tradesman to languish in a gaol—the mercenary merchant, whose narrow habits of trade have rendered him dead to every feeling of humanity, whose tall ships scour the burning coasts of Africa, and tear asunder the nearest and dearest ties of consanguinity—we despise, we shun their society, detest their principles, and abhor their practice. Satisfied with a little, we are seldom in want, and though we may not enjoy the luxuries of life, we have all its necessities. Thus, then, you know what belongs to the character of a gipsey—at least such are the gipseys of the north.'

Though half intoxicated, I was not bereft of reason ; I heard this defence of the gipseys with amazement. How a man with such accumulation of talent, could assimilate himself to a set of wretches, seemingly the very scum of society, puzzled me ; but, indeed, every circumstance I had known, that at all related to him, was equally mysterious ; he was a character, to me, altogether indefinable—a non-descript.

It will not be improper here, to observe, that as my companion knew nothing of Camelford before the present time, it could not be expected he should receive from his appearance, a very favourable impression, having much more experience of the gipsy tribe than myself, and being as contracted in his notions as he was in his knowledge of mankind, he was not very partial to the calling. At the same time, his frequent applications to the flask had rendered him extremely irritable ; and the word sacerdotal he interpreted as an insult offered to himself and his profession. At the conclusion of Camelford's speech, taking his pipe from his mouth, he muttered at intervals, 'Sacerdotal !—umph !' it's come to a pretty pass !' At length, knocking out the burnt embers, on his thumb-nail, he began :—

'That's very well, very well indeed, honest man ; and, if divided and subdivided, would lay the foundation for a good ten minutes discourse. I remember, when I went to St. Bee's, I had a kind of thesis to compose on the sixth commandment—'Thou shalt not steal.' Now I can't help thinking, Mr. Copperface, that if I had had you at my elbow, what a discourse might have been produced ! for, as Solomon says, 'Experience makes even fools wise.' At the conclusion of this speech, he, as usual, gratified himself with a loud, self-approving laugh, repeating the last sentence, 'Experience makes even fools wise.'

Throughout the whole of this silly, and, indeed,



ungrateful attempt at satire, I trembled for the reverend simpleton. Such a man as Camelford, alone, could have annihilated him; what imprudence then, to insult him at his own table, surrounded by his creatures, who both loved and revered him, and whose hospitality he had so liberally shared. I was, however, pleasingly deceived; for, although the other members of this heterogeneous society exhibited evident marks of anger, Camelford's high spirit, aided by his good sense, threw a degree of expression into his countenance, that savoured more of pity than anger; he turned to the parson, with a kind of half smile, and said, '*Eari quæ sentias æquo animo.*' On hearing this, a stern looking man, who sat at another table, started up, and looking fiercely towards us, replied, '*Nemo me impune lacessit.*' At this, Camelford rose in some heat, and turning to the man, exclaimed, '*Confido Conquiesco.*'

The parson, who fully understood this conversation, began to feel uncomfortable, and taking another horn to the health of the company, he said, 'I find we are amongst the literati; instruction in this country being so cheap, is a great advantage to the lower classes of society, and 'tis a man's own fault—'

I suspected he was going to make bad worse, and therefore interrupted him——'very true, parson, as you say, instruction in this country must be very cheap, or *you* would have remained in ignorance; for I have heard you say, your father was a working tailor at *Cartmel*, and your mother a washerwoman at the same place.' Now, though this was a fabrication, I hoped it might rouse the company to mirth, or at least, divert their thoughts from a subject, not quite grateful to their feelings. Indeed, his observations were both ill-natured and ill-timed, and tended to involve both him and myself.

What I jokingly said, answered my wish; the whole company joined in the laugh, not omitting the

reverend himself, who shook his fat sides, and said, 'Friend Romney must have his joke.' At length, the fatigues of the day, and the good cheer, had a somniferous effect, the divine snored most devoutly, and Camelford ordered two of his followers to lay him on some clean straw, in the other cavern. The conversation now became more general, and I was surprised to find the whole company, not only possessed of information but of polished manners; and two hours passed away, not merely with pleasure, but profit.

'Romney,' said Camelford, 'you are not used to late hours; we are accustomed to them, and you know, man is the child of habit; let me conduct you to your friend, recruit exhausted nature with a few hours repose, and in the morning you will depart in peace. He accompanied me to my bed of straw, and as I extended myself upon it, said in a melancholy tone, 'Good night! I leave you entombed before your time—would it were my case in reality!'

'What, in the name of heaven, Camelford, thus hangs upon your mind? Unbosom your griefs; they will be lessened by participation—and surely, you may trust me.'

'I know I may; but now I cannot, dare not; there will come a time, when you shall be informed of all.' Then taking my hand, he put a purse into it, with these words, 'I do not want money—you do; your income is insufficient—take that—you will find a ring—'tis a pledge of friendship—part not with it, for your life, till I demand it. Farewell till morning.' He grasped my hand convulsively, and departed.

A crowd of reflections kept me from repose. How did this man acquire a knowledge of my circumstances? I had never hinted, even remotely, to any one, the state of my finances—surely I am in a dream! No—the purse in my hand, and the snoring of my companion, convince me to the contrary. The ring—

too—this brought to my recollection the highwayman, and the ring he had so unwarrantably possessed himself of. Good heaven! if this should be the same—for I had every reason to suppose Camelford the robber—what a situation shall I be placed in! I must for ever conceal it, or be suspected for a thief. Part with it, I dare not—Camelford may be as dangerous an enemy, as he is now a friend. With these unpleasant reflections I fell asleep, nor awoke till the day was far advanced. ‘Where are we,’ said the parson. It required some reflection ere I could inform him; the only glimmering of light came, from the hole we had crept through, and the adjoining cavern was but dimly lighted by the painted window, I before mentioned.

We felt our way out, but found the place deserted; not a vestige of the last night’s hospitality remained, save my friend’s broken pipe.

‘What a prostitution of time!’ said the curate. I shall never forgive myself! A man of my cloth, who am honoured with the correspondence of a bishop who has twelve livings in his gift, to herd with vagabond gipseys! Let me see—is my money safe?—Well that is more than I expected. I remember his Lordship, in his last charge to the——’

‘D—n his Lordship,’ said I, having just struck my head with force against the wall, in endeavouring to find the passage—‘you can think and talk about nothing but bishops and livings; do try if your memory will furnish you with the means of extricating us from this infernal place.’

‘’Tis well for you we live not in the times of Bishop Bonnor, or you might repent your words—why, sir, you d—d the bishop! I assure you ’tis a very dangerous expression, and I don’t know, even now, when liberty borders on licentiousness, whether the Spiritual Court have not power to take cognizance of it.’

At this moment my dogs discovered the passage, and once more we beheld the face of day!

‘Thank God!’ said I.

‘Amen!’ said the parson—these are the only pious words I ever heard you make use of.’

We made the best of our way towards the farmer’s, and on the road were met by a number of people, headed by a constable, who informed us, they were in quest of a gang of gipseys, who had infested the country, and done much mischief for the last three weeks. ‘They are gone,’ said the parson—but I interrupted him—‘Yes they are gone from this part of the country, or, most likely we should have seen something of them.’ I then forced him away, for fear he should say all he knew.

‘Now, parson, you would have betrayed these people! Can you justify your conduct on a principle of gratitude? Have we not been treated hospitably by them? But, were it not so, your friendship for me should have withheld your tongue; for did not one of them save my life?’

‘Very true, very true my good friend, but these petty considerations must give way to the more weighty concerns of justice and the good of society. Here is a gang of licentious profligates, who break through all laws, civil and religious, and plunder without discrimination; nay, I dare say, they would not scruple to rob the hen roost—even of a bishop! and if this sacrilegious set were suffered to increase, we might soon, and with justice, cry out, the church is in danger!’ ‘your living, you mean parson; take away the livings, and your anxiety for the church will not endanger your repose.’

‘The labourer is worthy of his hire Mr. Romney; great is our industry, and great should be our reward; and for such *‘Dominus Providebit,’* as our Rector says.’

We were now met by the farmer and his two sons,

who had been all the morning in search of us, and were full of apprehensions for our safety. I partially related the strange adventure which filled the worthy man with astonishment; for he exclaimed——‘The ghost is then accounted for.’ Upon requesting an explanation, he continued:

‘For the last three years, at stated periods, there have been strange appearances seen at the Abbey both by day and night. *We* country people are ignorant, of course *superstitious*; and attributed these to the power of magic or supernatural agency; the consequence was, as might naturally be supposed, the ruins which were formerly much resorted to, both by the curious and the idle, were entirely deserted; no footstep approached them by day—no eye, but shunned even their most remote appearance by night.

We took leave of the farmer immediately after dinner, intending to shoot over the fields home. As if accidentally, I steered our course towards the abbey, and when near its vicinity pointed out some fields to the left, which I recommended to my companion, whilst I took the opposite direction, and approached the ruins. Arrived at the secret entrance, I wrote on a card, ‘*Your Rendezvous is discovered.*’ This I placed against the wall in such a manner, that no one entering that way, could possibly overlook it. I then rejoined my companion who was loading his gun, having, as he said, just *Tythead a Covey*.

Resting ourselves on the stump of a tree, I requested an explanation of some circumstances, relative to the preceding evening, which as yet, I was ignorant of.

These, he gave me in the following words, ‘As I went round the abbey in search of an entrance, a man unexpectedly started upon me; he had neither sword nor pistol, but he had weapons that have subdued more than either; they consisted of a large flask bottle of strong ale, and a drinking horn; he began

the attack, poured out a bumper, and held it towards me; full of courage, having tasted nothing since morning, I grappled with him, and in the struggle received the whole contents in my stomach; thus vanquished, he persuaded me to follow him, which I did, with your dogs at my heels. After some few questions, he said he knew you well, and was your friend; I followed through a subterraneous passage which led to the spot of ground you that moment overlooked, when placing a skull on the end of my gun, he advanced it to your face, and as you reached out your hand, gave it a blow with his cudgel. The whole business was entered upon and executed with such perfect good humour, that I, of course opposed it not; and after placing me in the comfortable niche where you found me, he set off in quest of you. But who and what is this man? he knows you; the knowledge, I suppose is mutual; oblige me so far as to develope the mystery, for one I am convinced there is, appertaining to this strange character.'

'I am little more enlightened respecting the person you allude to than yourself; I have by accident met him before, though not in the character of a gipsey, but my knowledge is too desultory to gratify curiosity.'

The pleasure of being moderately fatigued, the smiles of the woman one loves, the spoil laid on the table, the dogs fed and kennelled in clean straw, the snug little cot, the easy chair, the fire side, the—but wither am I going? a brother sportsman will feel with me, but 'tis *caviere* to the lame and the lazy, the plodding tradesman, and the pouring pendent; from such, I hope for that indulgence I should be willing to shew to their hobbies! though I might not be disposed to ride them.

Ann's astonishment when I related our adventures, was unbounded—'was it indeed possible? the elegant Camelford a highwayman! a gipsey! but he had pre-

served her husband's life, and with her latest breath, she would bless him for it.'

The purse contained nine guineas and some silver. The ring was every way remarkable—the stone, a valuable antique set round with amethyst; the cypher I. P. C. on the under side, and round the ring in white enamel, was engraved E. C. obit, Dec. 31st. 1730, Etat. 20.

## CHAPTER X.

## "SUCH THINGS ARE."

MRS. INCHBALD.

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"Let them be well used; for they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the times. After your death, you were better have a bad epitaph, than their ill report while you live." *"Hamlet."*

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ONE beautiful calm evening, in the latter end of September, I was standing on a large stone under the middle arch of the bridge endeavouring to ensnare the finny tribe—"my custom sometimes in the afternoon"—when I beheld rather a smartish looking group of pedestrians, coming down the hill; they consisted of three males and two females. On their nearer approach, I was considerably struck by their appearance. One of the men wore a gold-laced cocked hat, long ruffles, a faded pea-green coat, and an ivory headed cane, which he flourished with much self-importance; the other two, one in scarlet, the other black, with tarnished gold on their waistcoats, and silk stockings. The females were equally removed from plainness—their appearance smart and shewy.

The few inhabitants of this remote place were at their doors, marking the progress of this singular

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cavalcade. The blacksmith left his anvil; the exciseman stopped to gaze; the superannuated 'squire, and his still more ancient rib, peeped through the garden enclosure; and I eager to behold, and wondering who they could be, forgot my slippery situation in the middle of the river, lost my footing, and was immersed to my waist in the cooling element, at the moment they were entering the house of my neighbour, the Quaker.

The rivulet was neither broad nor deep; I got out with all possible expedition, lest the gazers should change their object, ran home, re-dressed myself, and returned to the public house, determined to know the rank and calling of these strange looking people. There was one common sitting-parlour in this hotel for the reception of travellers; and finding the party had ordered tea, I sent my compliments, requesting permission to take it with them. This was readily granted, and with my best bow, I sat down near the youngest of the ladies, expecting a greater treat, than *merely tea* could afford.

I was not disappointed; the appearance of these people was not more eccentric than their discourse. I have, in general, remarked that a man's calling may be known by his conversation; the present party discovered theirs, ere I had been two minutes in their company. The gentleman in the cocked hat had left the room previously to my entrance; and returning just as I sat down with my back towards the door, did not immediately perceive me; but throwing himself into an attitude, and at the same time shutting the door with much force, he bellowed out, 'Thou canst not say, I did it, bloody Banquo'—when observing me, he turned with great ease, took off his hat, and with a low and graceful bow, said 'Sir, I crave your pardon. When Roscius was an actor in Rome, then every actor rode upon his ass; but now every actor rides upon his ten toes,

as my shoes can witness. *Ecce signum!* turning up his foot, and exhibiting a sad lack of sole.

‘Oh fie, Mr. Best!’ cried the youngest of the females, ‘you should not talk of asses before ladies.’

‘I wonder Miss Usher, you should be surprized at the introduction of an ass, whilst Hamilton is in company.’

‘I’ll tell you what,’ replies Hamilton, taking up the remains of a lobster, he had been eating, ‘I make a better appearance than Best, for I enter with *ecolat*.’

‘Mr. Hamilton, my dear, pray reach the kettle? you are so lazy!’

‘True, madam! he is but a kind of a *lob*, and it’s impossible to make a *lob stir*’

With this kind of conversation, though it had neither wit nor sentiment to recommend it, I was highly amused; it was characteristic, and to me, had the recommendation of novelty. Free, easy, and unembarrassed, they played upon each other with the most perfect good humour. Each lively sally, each sprightly joke, was followed by a hearty laugh. I felt happy, and fancied my neighbour’s tea more highly flavoured, and his brown toast more truly delicious than any I had before tasted.

‘Pray gentlemen,’ said I, ‘what is your candid opinion of the stage? it must be a pleasant profession; is it profitable?’

The third gentleman who had hitherto remained silent, and who I found, was the manager, looked at me with surprize, and in a coarse Irish brogue replied, ‘*Plasing* and profitable! by my *soul* it’s *naither*; as to the pleasure my Jewel, I have been an actor man these thirty years, and *niver* could *plase mysilf* or any body *elze*; and as to the profit, it’s like Macbeth and the dagger, a man is continually grasping at shadows, whilst the substance slips through his fingers; there have I been rowling and scrowling up and

down the country for the last two years, and for what? Why, *Nix my dole*.—The stage! by the powers, sir, if you wish to bother your brains for the good of your bowels, you must not come there.'

This extraordinary speech did not come exactly within the orbits of my comprehension, but as freedom of speech seemed to be the order of the day, I observed,

'That doubtless, there were technical terms, belonging to the stage, as well as other professions, which none but professors could understand. As this was at present my case, I hoped he would pardon my curiosity, and inform me what was meant by '*Nix my dole*?''

'Aye, aye, manager!' was echoed by the whole company; 'let us have an explanation of '*Nix my dole*?''

'Find it out, ye spalpeens! Am I to supply you with brains? You see, sir, the ignorance of these people; it is not a gold-lace cock and pinch, nor knuckle-dusters of long lawn, that bestow *since and raison* ;

'These are the trappings and the suits, you know;

'There must be that within, that passeth show.'

But to answer your question, sir—'*Nix my dole*' is a species of the ancient Schlavonic, which I sometimes use, to express *Nothing at all at all*—a term very applicable to my company of comedians; for if you *sarch* till doomsday for their merit, you'll find it at last '*Nix my dole*.'

'Well said, manager!' replied Mr. Best; 'this is the first time ladies and gentlemen, that Mr. Cuthell ever made a speech without *bogging*.'

'Come, gentlemen,' cried the youngest female, 'have done with *the shop*, and speak in language

more intelligible. How can this gentleman who is a stranger to such jargon, understand what you mean by *bogging*? He will, perhaps, think you called the manager a *bog-trotter*; and in that case, if I was Mr. Cuthell, I should call you out with pistols.'

'Pistols!' replied Best, taking her in his arms and giving her a hearty kiss, there's a great gun for you!

'No,' said Miss, 'it's only a *blunder-buss*!'

The freedom and ease with which these people conversed; their impenetrable good humour, and satirical remarks on their profession and poverty, convinced me the followers of the stage were a happy people, and I longed to be enrolled a member.

The party were preparing for a march, when two returned chaises from Kendal, drove up to the door; from one of which descended a little man, carrying a fiddle-case; nearly as large as himself, who, in coming into the room, was greeted by the name of *Fidliano*. This person I some years before recollected as leader of the band in the Manchester Theatre. His travelling companions were an old woman and two children.

It was soon agreed that the pedestrians should change their mode of travel. Accordingly, the carriages were filled, and Mr. Brown the little musician, placed in front seated upon his fiddle-case, out of which he had previously taken his instrument, and, with much humour, addressed the ladies:—

"Thus, to your Majesty, says our suppliant muse,  
Won'd you a solo or sonata chuse?  
Name but your will—'tis done as soon as spoke."

'A civil fellow—play up the *Black Joke*!' exclaimed one of the ladies. This apt quotation caused an universal laugh; and whilst Brown rasped, in burlesque style, the '*Black Joke*,' the merry group were

driven away, to the astonishment of the inhabitants of Newby Bridge; who should these authentic memoirs be read in so remote a place, will, doubtless, recollect the ludicrous circumstance, and in the recollection, renew their laughter.

The last scene of this comedy was witnessed from the cottage door by Ann, my wife; and when I recounted the whole of the conversation, it produced a train of thinking of serious import to my future welfare, and which in the end, turned the tide of my affairs into a new channel.

We had passed about eight months in obscurity, and had more than once, been reduced to the last shilling. 'Twas impossible to live without taking credit; the time of payment approached, and no money due from Yorkshire.

To an upright mind the idea of being dunn'd is terrible—to turn the honest tradesman without his due, a galling reflection! and what we had hitherto avoided. These meditations produced an inquiry into our expenditure, and proved what we ought long before to have known, the impossibility of existing on so limited an income. We saw the evil, but how to procure a remedy! Trade, my habits had unfitted me for—my propensities did not *originally* tend *that* way; from my youth I had a predilection for the stage, and vanity whispered, 'You have talent.' Ann disapproved the expedient altogether; she could not brook the degradation, and advised me to apply to Sir Thomas H——; perhaps, through his interest, a place under government might be obtained. This proposal I would not listen to a moment—I longed for a state of more independence; and this I conceived, the stage alone would grant.

Many and various were our discussions, I might say, altercations. Ann could not be prevailed upon to think the stage as respectable as any other profes-

sion, or that in becoming a player, I should retain the appellation of 'a gentleman.' At length, I wrung from her, her 'slow leave;' indeed, it was an amiable weakness common with her, to adopt my opinions, which, had she more steadily opposed, would in the end, have been better for us both.

Having gained my point and finally concluded on the stage as my future destination, it became necessary to consider how an engagement was to be procured. The only company I had the least knowledge of was Messrs. Austin and Whitlock's; to them I wrote and was favoured with a very polite answer. 'They were on the point of leaving Chester; but if I chose to join them at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, I should be immediately enrolled in the list of performers—my talents fairly put to the test, and my emoluments upon a par with the rest of the company.'

Here was a glorious prospect for a young adventurer! Received into immediate pay, with a fair opportunity of displaying those talents which had hitherto been buried in obscurity, and which I flattered myself, would burst forth with meridian splendour. Nay, even Ann with all her dislike to the stage, helped to fan this spark into a flame, by flattering my pride with encomiums on my abilities. Alas! *her* praise and *my* consequent pleasure, only shewed our ignorance.

Amongst young candidates for the stage, inclination is often mistaken for ability; 'tis true I was not destitute of talent, but it lay in a different line from that which at present occupied my thoughts.

Hamlet, Romeo, Douglas, and George Barnwell, were my constant companions. I stormed on the banks of the lake, modulated my voice into the softness of love, in the paddock behind my cottage; practised the most graceful and least hurtful method of falling, on the carpet in the parlour—and the

more common declamatory passages were rehearsed in every lane, within a mile of my habitation.

John Braithwaite the quaker and Ben the blacksmith, learning my future designation, left the tap-room and the forge, to try what effect their oratorical powers would have in counteracting so rash a decision. The landlord, though he could scarcely articulate a word, through the influence of the *spirit*, read me what he thought, a lecture on the immorality of the stage, and the dissipated lives of its professors; whilst honest Ben hitching up his small-clothes, and spitting a quantity of tobacco-spittle on the carpet, swore it was a blackguard trade, and he would rather see his son a beggar, than he should *disgrace his family* by turning *player*. I smiled at the inconsistency of these moralists, but gave them credit for their good intentions.

Newcastle is at least a hundred and forty miles from Newby Bridge. Money was a necessary article in the expedition, which the sale of my furniture, after paying my debts amply supplied. The auctioneer gave the final blow to our comfortable cottage, by knocking down all its conveniences to the best bidder; nay, even my dogs and shooting apparatus were disposed of, so determined was I to sacrifice every other propensity, and devote my whole time and attention to this new undertaking.

I cannot pass over this part of my history, without indulging a few melancholy reflections on the instability of earthly enjoyments. Perhaps a greater degree of comfort could scarcely be imagined, than we experienced in this retired abode, and which a trifling addition to our income might have continued—but in a moment the tent is struck, a march is beaten, and the quietude of a country life exchanged for the bustle, dissipation, and confusion of a busy world. Alas! had I known the sea of troubles I was

launching my bark into, I should have sunk under the idea of never being able to weather the storm.

Were it possible for me to express what I now feel, whilst recalling to memory these circumstances, I perhaps, might make a similar impression on my readers; but in writing as in acting, 'tis probable those whose feelings are most acute, make the least impression. I have known a respectable actor cry like a woman through an affecting part, without producing any similar sensation in the audience; whilst Cooke would drown them in tears, and at the same time, be silyly winking at his friends behind the scenes.

With a hundred pounds in my pocket—the future emoluments of the theatre, which my sanguine imagination magnified into a handsome provision, added to our little income—I thought poverty could never approach us; I looked on the cottage with contempt, and left it without regret! Yes, I left a degree of happiness, I have never since experienced without regret!



## CHAPTER XI.

## "THE REHEARSAL."

DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

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"For the law of wit and liberty these are the only men."

SHAKESPEARE.

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I FOLLOWED Camelford's advice,—'I launched into the world, and was no longer a cypher in society.'

We reached Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in February 1783, without accident, and settled ourselves in a comfortable lodging, at half-a-guinea per week. The manager welcomed me with much cordiality and politeness—'hoped I had had a pleasant journey—was I comfortably accommodated with a lodging?' &c. and giving me a friendly shake by the hand, 'begged to see me at the theatre, on the following rehearsal.'

The morning came, and I felt, as a stranger, an unpleasant sensation, at the idea of facing the actors; but the manager, with his usual attention, introduced me into the green room; the company rose—they bowed—I did the same, and with much confusion of countenance, took my seat. They consisted, as nearly as I can recollect, of Messrs. Austin and

Whitlock, the managers; Munden, Duncan, Platt, Kennedy, O'Reilly, Mapples, Clarke, Morton, Sanderson, Stanton, Mason; Mrs. Kennedy, Mrs. Munden, Mrs. Duncan, Mrs. Morton, Mrs. Mapples, and Mrs. Lestar. I eagerly, in silence, listened to their conversation, but did not observe that freedom, that spirited pleasantry, which marked the itinerants at Newby Bridge; on the contrary, formality, reserve, and affectation, appeared to my inquisitive mind the leading traits of my present associates. I have since had reason to correct this opinion, respecting the company *in general*; and now, from long experience, honestly declare, that the green room of a respectable theatre is a scene of animation and pleasantry, provided the manager's manners are conciliatory, and his conversation attentively polite to all; in short, provided he is in every respect the reverse of Mr.—, who, some years since, commanded the dramatic corps in Liverpool.

In the evening I took Ann to the theatre, where we were much entertained; the company were highly respectable, and what is called the *business* of the theatre was conducted in a masterly style. I was not a little surprized, at the end of the play, to see Munden come forward in the dress of a sailor to sing '*Blow high, blow low*'—a song totally out of his line, and beyond his powers—another proof, among a thousand in my recollection, that actors, particularly young ones, make a wrong estimate of their talents; the greatest comic geniusses having generally started as servants of Melpomene.

I regularly attended the rehearsal, in expectation of employment; but, though the manager continued his politeness, not a word was said relative to my appearance. At last, I spoke to the prompter, and learnt to my great surprize, that in all probability, some time would elapse, ere my play would be brought forward, as several new and popular pieces

were in rehearsal, and *George Barnwell* was not at this time an object to the managers. During this interval, I employed myself in studying long tragedy parts, which I never performed, and attending the green room, where I was, in a few days tolerably familiar.

At the conclusion of the first week, the prompter put fifteen shillings into my hand—my share of the profits. It was then the custom, in most theatres out of London, to give shares—an iniquitous business, by which the manager laid his hands upon every thing, and gave the poor actor a paltry, scanty subsistence.

Mr. Austin, who had remained in Manchester, now joined us; and being very deservedly a favourite, a full house was expected to his first performance. 'Tis strange! but this gentleman, possessing first rate comic talents, chose to open in *Hamlet*! Such a perversion of judgment is excusable in youth; but Mr. Austin was, at this period, a veteran in experience, though not in years.

At the end of the third week, on receiving my share, I was given to understand that *George Barnwell* would be rehearsed that morning, in order for its representation the Wednesday following. This long-wished-for intelligence threw me into a perturbation of spirits I could not conceal; it was not pleasure—it was fear almost amounting to agony. I ran home to inform my wife, who laughed at my apprehensions, flattered my abilities and soothed me into composure. The hour arrived—I attended the rehearsal, and in my life never passed through such a fiery ordeal. The prompter with all the consequence of office, was seated on the stage—the managers, alternately attentively listening, or whispering to each other—the performers, surrounding the wings, or perhaps, thinly scattered in the boxes, were, to my terrified imagination, more awful than a larger audience of in-

different spectators; their judgment is more to be feared, because when sincere, 'tis more correct.

My second speech seemed to be approved by the managers, and their opinion is generally echoed by the performers. One of these gentlemen energetically clasped his hands, and swore it was the best attempt he had ever seen; then turning upon his heel, was heard to say, in an under-voice, '*Blarney.*'

In tremulous tones and with a palpitating heart, I got through the first rehearsal; when one of the managers called me aside, and taking me by the hand—'Mr. Romney, my advice is, that your next attempt be in some other line. I do not think tragedy is your *forte*; not but you speak sensibly enough, but you want energy; neither is your voice calculated for it.' I thanked him for his candour, and returned home mortified and disappointed; my tragic talents were disputed, and all my air-built hopes of a livelihood by the stage at an end! Ann, whose disposition was foreign to any thing like despondence, rallied my want of fortitude, and urged me to persevere. She very wisely discovered too, 'that perhaps the manager was right—I was certainly very facetious when a youth;' and then called to my recollection 'a thousand queer pranks I had played when an apprentice, which threw not only her father's house, but the whole neighbourhood into confusion.' There was in her discourse an animated playfulness, that could almost at any time, rouse my *more reflecting* mind; at this important moment it acted as a stimulus, and I determined after the play of George Barnwell, to make trial of my talents in the comic walk.

Wednesday arrived, and two hours before the play began, I was completely dressed for the London Apprentice; but as my figure was of the greyhound make, I added three or four waistcoats to give me a proper rotundity, and cork calves to give an agree-

able prominence to my legs. A chair conveyed me to the theatre, where I sat in *statu quo*, as miserable as heart could wish, 'till the tingle of the prompter's bell gave 'note of dreadful preparation;' and then my feelings could only be compared to those of a condemned criminal, whom the solemn toll summons to instant execution. The call-boy cried out in the most unfeeling key, '*Mr. Romney!*' The sound was discordant to every faculty of my mind; yet he must be obeyed. I crept towards the scenes, my legs scarcely doing their office, and looked round, hoping there was no witness to my disgraceful imbecility. A faltering step and palpitating heart, brought me before the audience, whose encouraging plaudits in some degree relieved me; and when the scene concluded, I found myself a hero. The flattering reception given to a young performer by the best-natured audience in the world roused my dormant faculties; vanity suggested an idea that the manager's judgment was fallible, and that I might yet be an honour to the buskin.

Platt, who was an actor of the old school, played *Thoroughgood*. In declamation he was pompous, and well versed in all the crossings and re-crossings necessary to impose upon the million. Pointing the toe, and standing erect like a fogle-man, he called *the line of beauty*. A cocked hat drawn over his right eye-brow, gave a fierceness to his appearance, which he endeavoured to support both on the stage and in private life, by never giving up an argument, or suffering if he could help it, a dissenting opinion. Mos-sop was the criterion by which he judged of stage excellence, and any deviation from that bombastic actor was a crime against the sovereignty of eminence. His discourse was too often interlarded with execration; and if in controversy, like a skilful engineer, he could not storm the fort of his adversary, he generally concluded with a *Blast*.

The first four acts went off smoothly enough ; but in the prison scene, poor Platt, having taken too much of the '*creature*,' his favourite word, was embarrassed, and made frequent applications to the prompter. At length there was a total stand ; I had not experience enough in the profession to cover the mistake by speaking out of my turn, and Platt, pretending to be much affected at our parting scene, covered his face with his tragedy handkerchief, to give time for recollection. Vain was the effort—his grief could no longer be continued ; upon which he hurried to the side of the wing, and said, 'Give me the word b——t you !' The prompter nettled at his intemperance, instead of obeying this imperative command, very coolly closed the book, and walked away. This drove Pomposo to the last extremity ; and continuing his strut round the stage, he took me by the hand, and said in a whisper, 'Don't be alarmed, I'll bring you off, my boy.' Then, leading me down, he thus addressed the audience : 'Ladies and Gentlemen—As there is no accounting for the timidity of young actors, especially on their first appearance, this gentleman I hope, will experience that lenity you have so often shewn on similar occasions. His fears have caused some little inaccuracy, which I trust, will not be repeated.' He then made his bow and his exit.

Taken by surprise, not at all expecting the imperfection would be placed to my account, I was in reality, now 'at fault.' Platt had left the scene unfinished—I knew not where, nor how to take it up. My embarrassment was visible to the audience ; but they took the good-natured part—they applauded, I bowed, and *Trueman* came to my relief.

When the curtain dropped, Platt seized me by the hand, and giving it a hearty shake, exclaimed, 'I told you my dear boy, I'd bring you off—b——t me !' In vain I expostulated—in vain I pleaded my

own accuracy. No redress could be obtained ; on the contrary, he wrapped himself up in fancied superiority, and said very gravely, ‘ Young man, you know but little of the *Old Bailey* ; when you have been so long on the *boards* as I have, you will know how to value the service I have done you.’ The performers tittered ; even the manager smiled, and said it was the best theatrical manœuvre he ever heard of.

From this moment I took leave of the buskin, and devoted my leisure hours to the comic muse—studying such parts as I *wished* to perform, rather than those my inexperience in the profession rendered me fit for.

During a period of five weeks, I was only called upon twice ; still I received *a share*, equal to those who laboured in play and farce night after night, and who were, at least many of them, actors of sterling merit. Such was the injustice of the *sharing* plan ! Thank heaven ! such a petty, paltry, iniquitous system no longer exists. Professors are now rewarded, as far as the parsimony of managers will allow, according to their merit, though not equal to their deserts.

When the benefits commenced, I was entrusted with several trifling comic characters, such as *William*, in ‘ As you like it.’—*Diggory*, in ‘ She stoops to conquer’ &c.—but nothing of consequence ; those parts were filled by experienced actors, and I thought myself happy in taking their refuse.

Not having any pretensions to a benefit, nor acquaintance in the town, I, of course, declined the manager’s offer of taking one, and at the close of sixteen weeks, found myself *minus* about twenty pounds, with no immediate engagement ; for a longer stay, with the present company, I conceived to be a loss, both of time and money. I had in the course of the season, written to several managers, but without much encouragement to join them. One gentleman would engage

me, for the first line of low comedy, provided I could dance between the acts and play Harlequin. Another gave his company *small certainties*, of nine shillings and half-a-guinea per week, according to their *merit*. A third played all the leading parts himself, but had no objection to give me a share in the business, provided I could occasionally assist in the orchestra. The fourth would allow me a *share*, with a shilling per night extraordinary, if I would when leisure served, take the prompt-book, receive the checks, and help to distribute the bills.

Thoroughly disgusted with these several answers, I was on the point of returning to my friends in Yorkshire, when Tony Lebrun, who had joined the company previous to the benefits, burst into my room, with an open letter in his hand, containing an engagement for himself, and one for me, if I chose to accept of it.

As nothing more eligible offered, I joyfully acceded to the proposal—kept Tony to dinner, and over a bottle of wine, settled the time and manner of our march to Wolverhampton; where I was to fill the second line of low comedy—have a *share* and a benefit in each town, viz. Wolverhampton, Worcester, Gloucester, and Ludlow.

I had no great opinion of *sharing*; but with that partiality to my own abilities which is no where more prevalent than on the stage, I conceived there would be little doubt of the benefits proving lucrative, for I should now have an opportunity of exercising my talents to advantage.

As I shall have the pleasure of again visiting Newcastle, during the course of these Memoirs, and under more auspicious circumstances, I forbear to speak of the inhabitants till that period arrives. At this time I was a stranger, in a strange land—unknowing, and unknown; in 1786, I was—but let me not anticipate.



## CHAPTER XII.

## "EVERY MAN IN HIS HUMOUR."

BEN JOHNSON.

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"If the rascal have not given me medicines to make me love him, I'll be hang'd—it could not be else.

"*Henry IV.*"

"A merrier man,

Within the limits of becoming mirth,  
I never spent an hour's talk withal."

"*Love's Labour Lost.*"

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TONY Lebrun's finances were not in a flourishing state; he was rich in humour, and *good* humour—but of the current coin, which alone, in this vile world, makes a man respectable, he was woefully deficient. However, a post-chaise would hold him very snugly, besides our little fat dog; nay, the admission of Tony would add to our travelling company—he was a veteran in the service—knew the road well, was upon terms of intimacy with the people at every inn we should visit; in short, his joining us was an accommodation to all parties; and his share of the expense was to be disbursed at his next benefit, which could not fail of being productive, for he had a most extensive and respectable acquaintance among

*blacksmiths* of Wolverhampton.' It may not be amiss to give the reader some idea of this singular character; for the truth of which I appeal to my theatrical brethren, to almost the whole of whom he was well known, and by them generally respected.

Tony Lebrun was, in figure, something like the late celebrated Parsons, though not quite so tall. The flexible features of his face were capable of good comic effect, and had he possessed the smallest degree of prudence and perseverance, would, doubtless, have been a good actor: 'but company, villainous company, is the ruin of us all'—at least so it was with Tony; he preferred a long pipe, and the chimney corner of a public house, to the boards of a playhouse, and the fumes of tobacco to the fame of the drama. The prominence of his nose and chin, added to a large cocked hat, which he constantly wore, rendered his profile singularly laughable, and the constant subject of caricature; he wore long ruffles, and as a strict attention to cleanliness was not amongst Tony's virtues, their appearance after a week's wear, may be easily conceived. His gait too was remarkable; with his right hand he grasped an ivory-headed cane, whilst his left was constantly employed in supporting the waistband of his small-clothes, which every step he took, required an effort to replace. He was a facetious companion—abounded with theatrical anecdote, and his company, of course, in general bequest—perfect in all the parts of the drama, *off*, he never knew a line, *on*, the stage—personally acquainted with every manager in the kingdom, from Oliver Carr, up to David Garrick; his recommendation was generally attended to, and the poor actors often found a friend in Tony, who, from the contracted state of his finances, had seldom any other way of shewing the goodness of his heart. Swearing was not amongst the list of his vices, but he had a phrase that intruded on all occasions—'*Od rabbit it!*'

Amidst his peculiarities, he possessed virtues that endeared him to his friends, and enemies he had none.

Such, as I can recollect, four and twenty years ago, was Tony Lebrun. When I offered him a seat in our chaise, I was a stranger to his eccentricities, although his physiognomy gave me an idea that he was not one of your *common, every-day* characters.

We slept the first night at York. The theatre was open, though unfortunately, it was not the night of performance; and as Lebrun was acquainted with the manager and all the performers, he and I went in quest of the general rendezvous, and joined the merry group, where we passed a few hours, as pleasantly as fine ale, good humour, and excellent jokes, could make them. The next night we reached Manchester, the theatre was open, but to my regret, we were too late for the play; however, Tony was soon surrounded by the actors, who came, not only to enjoy his jokes, but his liquor; for having finished six bottles of wine, they took a friendly leave, and left Tony answerable for the whole, who in the joy of his heart, forgot his inability, or at least, never troubled his head about it, till I jogged his memory next morning, by shewing him the amount of the bill.

‘Lay out, lay out, my dear fellow,’ hitching up his small-clothes in the usual way, ‘I’ll pay all at my benefit; the *natives* at Wolverhampton won’t forget me, and for interest, I have a comical wig that my old friend Ned Shuter used to wear in *Old Hardcastle*, you shall have it, and as you mean to *do* the part, I’ll put you up to a gag or two of his, that’s sure to bring them down.’

I had by this time, become pretty well acquainted with the cant phrases in use amongst actors, and returned my thanks accordingly. We arrived at Stone, to a late dinner; and as I stood with Mrs. R——, at the window, we saw Tony, who had

strolled out the moment we alighted, coming up the street, arm in arm with an odd dressed, queer looking person, whom he introduced as 'Manager Horton.'

The dinner being over, at which he played a principal part, 'Od rabbit it,' cried Tony, 'we must not starve the cause; a manager, two first rate comedians, a lady, and a lap dog, can surely afford a bottle of wine,' which being produced, Tony gave the manager to understand, 'that I was a young gentleman of handsome fortune, going to perform at Wolverhampton for my amusement.'

I reproved Tony for his false statement, and inquired of Mr. Horton, where *his* company were at that time? 'Vy look'e Sir,' smiling at my companion, 'my company is all in this *here* town, and though I say it, a better set you'll not see at any fair in the *kingdom*, set aside *Bartlemy*—ax Mr. Lebrun else.'

The man's idiom was new to me, and the honour of my profession injured by this harangue from a *manager*. Tony was silent; and merely to keep up the talk—conversation there was none—I replied, 'Races and fairs are highly productive, no doubt, of pit and gallery auditors; but I should think your boxes would be empty.'

'Empty!—no less than forty in a box.'

'Indeed! I didn't suppose so small a place as Stone was capable of supporting so extensive a theatre.'

'Vy, sir, my theatre *will* hold folk enough; but the expense is *wery* heavy,' so I thought the other day, as how I'd take in a *partender*, a *famous* fellow, one who had got a little of the *ready*, and had a good knack at your *flip-flaps* and *somersets*; but I soon found he was *canœuvring*, and so I gave him the *bag*.'

This speech was nearly unintelligible—*Flip-flaps!*

plainly told'—

*summer-sets !——‘ Oh ! you mean to say, your set do not perform in the winter.’*

Tony could contain himself no longer, but broke forth into a horse-laugh, whilst Manager Horton continued—

‘ *Vy, look’e, sir, I’s afeard ve’ve been crossing questions, this here while ; you take me for a stage manager, and so I am—but it’s a mountebank stage.’*

‘ Why, sir, didn’t you talk of your theatre, and your boxes that would hold forty people ? ’

‘ Pills, sir—pills—I meant.’

‘ Aye,’ cried Tony, ‘ pills, to be sure—I saw friend Romney, you could not swallow the pills.’

I confess this explanation did not increase my respect for *the manager* ; however, there was one trait in his character not general amongst Tony’s acquaintance—he *paid his share of the dinner bill*, and we set off to Wolverhampton.

As we proceeded, I could not help observing that ‘ the mountebank doctor to whom he had introduced me, was not the kind of acquaintance I should prefer—that my habits were ill adapted to such company ; in short, that his society was very much beneath that with which I had been used to associate, especially, being a man so truly void of every necessary requisite to render his company desirable.’

‘ Od rabbit it ! sir, you don’t know me ; you’ll find me out bye and bye. I am one of your equality men—I am a provident bee, sir, and know how to extract honey from the coarsest flowers. This *pompous* distance amongst fellow creatures may be very prudent, but I am sure it very much contracts the small portion of pleasure allotted to mankind. As an instance—suppose now we had been detained in Stone all night, you would have been kicking your heels alone——Od rabbit it ! I ask pardon, I forgot this *darling little woman* ;——well, but suppose you R——, at th.

were a bachelor like me, you would be kicking your heels alone at your inn, deprived by your grandeur, of the pleasure I should enjoy. Sally out, (that's *my* way) stop at the first public house—listen for a noise—if caused by laughter, so much the better—if not, in I go—call for my liquor—a yard of clay of course. Sixteen coblers seated round a kitchen fire—sit down amongst them—laugh with them, or at them, it matters not which, for there are so many causes to cry in our passage through life, that the man of sense and the philosopher seize the laugh wherever they can find it——‘Angels and ministers of grace!’ who’s here?’ Then putting his head out of the window, ‘Stop, Coachee! ‘Be’st thou a spirit of health; or goblin damn’d? thou com’st in such a questionable shape, I’ll speak to thee: I’ll call thee’ Joey! Hollycomb! fellow townsman!!!’

A figure now presented itself that almost defies description. Apparently fifty in constitution, though not more than thirty-five in years, for the marks of dissipation were legibly written in his putrid complexion. To the nose of a Bardolph, were attached the figure, and nearly the costume of Romeo’s apothecary. His wardrobe, contained in a snuffy check handkerchief, hung on a stick over his left shoulder.

The actor, for such he was—aye, and a good one too, replied with a degree of humour not to be expected from his forlorn appearance, ‘Tony, my boy!’ ‘it gives me wonder, great as my content, to meet thee here! What, you knew me by my nose?’

‘Aye, aye, I nosed you coming down the hill. Well, ‘what bloody scene has Roscius now to act?’ what unfortunate barn art thou going to besiege?’

‘Apropos!’ replied Hollycomb, ‘we have been closely besieged at Bilston, and obliged to surrender, sword in hand.’

‘How so?’

‘An honest tale speeds best, being plainly told’—

so thus it was: Our company was reduced to six effective hands, including the women; so, as I had taken Bilston some time before, we went, and gave out *for a few nights only*. But it unfortunately happened, that the bellman claimed a right to stick up our bills, for which he demanded two shillings. Now, this extortion I did not chuse to comply with, for we never used more than half a dozen, and those in manuscript. To make short of my story, 'Richard' was the play, and Larry Conner, the tyrant—you know Larry's lungs—he was bellowing away with a voice of thunder, when the battle of Bosworth Field was interrupted by the war dogs of justice, in the shape of two constables followed by the identical bellman. The theatre, a room in a small public house, was quickly deserted, our poor *sticks* and *rags* pulled down, with strict orders to decamp in the morning, or the first floor of a jail was to be our portion. I am now going to *take* Stone, with very poor hopes of success, as I understand we are to be opposed by a mountebank Doctor. However, something must be done—empty pockets and empty stomachs are miserable companions.'

During this relation I observed a tear steal down Tony's cheek. At the conclusion, he muttered to himself 'Od rabbit the bellman!' At length, he leaned out of the chaise window, looked up the road and down the road, and asked the postilion if there was a public house at hand?

'Not within a mile,' replied the actor, 'I made my last disbursement there, for a small glass, just to keep the wind off my stomach.'

'Lend me a shilling,' whispered Tony. I put a crown into his hand, which, stifling his feelings, and rallying his spirits, he gave to poor Hollycomb, saying, 'lay out—lay out Bardolph, this noble makes an angel, an' it were two, take it all.'

‘Thank you—thank you, my old Co-mate ; I confess my spirits began to flag ; but now,’ throwing his bundle across his shoulder and bowing to Mrs. R——  
‘Richard’s himself again !’

We spent the remainder of our journey, in moralizing on the instability of human happiness ; ‘this man,’ said Tony, ‘poor and miserable as he looks, I remember a great favourite in some of the most respectable towns of our island ; Alas ! poor Hollycomb ! Od rabbit it ! who knows what may be our own lot ! grass and hay—here to-morrow, and gone to-day ; but never mind my boy, there’s no wisdom in anticipation ;

“ An ounce of mirth, is worth a pound of sorrow,

“ We’ll laugh to-night, and cry perhaps to-morrow.”



## CHAPTER XIII.

## "MANAGEMENT."

REYNOLDS.

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"Oh that men should put an enemy into their mouths,  
To steal away their brains." "Orbello."

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AT Wolverhampton we were snugly accommodated with a lodging; Tony as usual, taking up his residence in a public house. At eight o'clock, the mistress of the house came to know what she should provide for supper, at the same time informing us 'that there had been *seven geese*, and sixteen *roast beefs* cried that day.'

This was a matter beyond our comprehension; but an explanation gave us to understand, that on a Saturday, every public house that roasted a goose, or a piece of beef, gave notice through the town by the public cryer. This was not only profitable to the owners of said beef and geese, but a great accommodation to small families, and people in lodgings, who were thereby supplied with a comfortable meal, at a moderate expense, and of which we took frequent advantage during our stay in this town.

The next day being Sunday, was of course a time of rest, but on Monday I was introduced by my

travelling companion to Mr. Powel, the manager ; and from his conversation was led to suppose that my situation would be comfortable enough.

The company consisted of Messrs. Pero, Powel, Penn, Richards, Nunns, Wood, Whalley, Vale, Mason, Durravan and son ; Mrs. Pero, Mrs. Richards, Mrs. Nunns, Mrs. Mason, Mrs. Wood, Mrs. Owen ; which, with Tony and myself, made up a very respectable party ; and 'Ralph in the Maid of the Mill' was fixed upon for my opening part, in which I acquitted myself apparently to the satisfaction of both the audience and manager. After the play, Mr. Powel invited me to take a glass with him at the Swan, over which he opened his mind very freely regarding his private circumstances, and seemed to place a degree of confidence in me, which a long intimacy could alone have authorized ; being unused to his company, I did not perceive that the stimulus of liquor brought forth sentiments that, in sober moments, he would have concealed. I found that his partner, Pero, was by no means a man to his mind ; he spoke redundantly of the excellence of the circuit, the costliness of the wardrobe, and the money that might be made under certain regulations ; wished for a partner capable of taking an active share in the business, the whole weight of which, at present, lay upon his shoulders, and engaged so much of his time, that he had scarcely leisure to take a sociable glass with a friend, which, though no drinker, nature sometimes required.

This Powel was, some years ago, a great favourite in Yorkshire ; he was an actor of good conception and sound judgment, but his voice was inconceivably disgusting, a kind of speaking counter-tenor, capable of little modulation. His memory was uncommonly retentive, he never forgot a part, or even a line of a part that he was once literally studied in, though it required labour and length of time to im-

print it on his mind. I have known him walk six hours in his room, reading over a part, of (what is called in theatrical phraseology) two *lengths*; that is, twice two and forty lines, without making much progress. My experience of human nature was a good deal enlarged since I had launched into the theatrical world, and from what I observed, I found it necessary to be cautious in giving implicit credit to appearances—in respect to manager Powell, however, a very small share of discernment was sufficient to fathom his character. From his repeatedly assuring me he was no drunkard, I might perhaps have been led to believe him, had he not at last, fallen off his chair, in a thorough state of intoxication.

I assisted the waiters in taking him home, where we were received by his wife with a shriek, and an attempt to faint; but not being able to accomplish it, she sat herself down in an armed chair, and rolled about a pair of large goggling eyes like the wire worked glass ones, in a wax doll; in my life I never beheld such a figure; it was then the fashion for ladies to wear a large quantity of something near a foot high, called a *toque*, over which the hair was dressed, with curls tier o'er tier on each side, and literally plaistered with powder and pomatum; over one of these, of an uncommon height, Mrs. Powel had thrown a white handkerchief, and tied it under the chin; having naturally a lengthened visage, the longitude, from the top of her head-dress to the chin, could not be less than two feet, and when she leaned back in her chair, had it not been for the motion of her eyes, she might very well have passed for an Egyptian mummy. The apartment was of respectable dimensions; and well furnished, with a recess at the end, in which stood a bed; on a side-board, were placed the remains of the meat, vegetables, and pudding, left at dinner; though the season was summer, there was a large fire, the windows were never opened

to admit the air, on the contrary, sand bags were placed to expel it, the door was listed, and even the key-hole stuffed with cotton to keep all tight. From this description, the reader will easily conceive the miscellaneous congregation of scents <sup>which</sup> assailed my olfactories; the choice was, a precipitate retreat, or a fit of nausea; I chose the former, and left the manager to the enjoyment of his perfumes, and the company of his parboiled looking wife.

One day about a month after my arrival, when wine had warmed the heart of Powel, he began upon the usual topic, his dislike of Pero, and his wish for a more active partner; hinting at the same time, how eligible such an establishment would be for a young man, who, like me, was determined on the profession, and ambitious of excelling, which could no way be so quickly accomplished, as by a share in the management when I should have an opportunity of choosing my parts, and performing only *what* I liked, and *when* I liked.

The idea of being manager, was, I confess, a flattering one. Four hundred pounds was the sum Pero expected for his share, two of which were to be paid down, the remainder by instalments at six and twelve months. Ann eagerly approved the scheme; accordingly I wrote to Yorkshire, inquiring if a mortgage was practicable, stating my plan, and future prospects.

Tony Lebrun, who knew more of the world, particularly the theatrical world, than I did, disapproved the business altogether; '*Od rabbit it,*' you'll not have a shirt to your back in twelve months! it would be as rational for me to undertake the management of the untameable hyæna, or what is still more difficult, my own passions, as for a novice like you, to manage a set of strolling players; your feelings are not sufficiently callous, you have too good an opinion of mankind, you'll be the prey of every artful adventurer, who has ingenuity enough to form a plausible story;

*Od rabbit it!* you must be mad to think of such a scheme. Suppose, which is very probable, the business should be bad, and there is little, or perhaps nothing to share; can you bear to see a man, his wife, and six children without bread? No! you lend money, which will never be repaid; to supply which you run in debt with your tradesmen, they become importunate, you are irritable; to avoid their clamour, you sell your share for an old song, and thus get rid of your little patrimony, which would always be a decent backset, and, added to your *share* and benefits, afford you a comfortable livelihood.'

This really good advice, had I been wise enough to follow it, would have saved me years of misery, or rather of poverty, for they are by no means synonymous terms; competence is certainly a great blessing, but though deprived of it, whilst blessed with my little wife, strong health, and the perfect use of my faculties, I cannot be called miserable.

Mr. Pero, the other manager, had been out of town ever since my arrival, he now returned, and I was a good deal surprized to find him so different a character, from what Mr. Powel's account led me to suppose; upon investigation, he proved a plain, kind hearted, good humoured man, and I soon found, that instead of Powel being the only active partner, it was in fact quite the contrary, that Pero was the man of business. Tony introduced me to him, and whispered, 'if you are determined on this mad scheme of management, better consult with him, he will be more candid than the other, and won't deceive you.'

We soon became intimate; he was a pleasant, harmless character, and was, *in fact*, what the other pretended to be—a *sober man*. When I told him my wish to purchase his share of the concern, he said, 'he had no other motive for disposing of it, than his dislike to Powel, whose frequent ebriety made him both an unpleasant and an unprofitable partner; but,

added he, 'the man, either through intoxication or fickleness, changes his mind so often, there is little dependance on his word. I'll give you an instance: you dined with him three days ago; he was then very anxious for you to become the purchaser; since that time, short as it is, he has to my knowledge, been advising Richards to do the same. Now this Richards is a deep fellow, who knows Powel's weak side, and will take advantage of it; in short, he is a man I don't wish to have any dealings with, and if you think the purchase adviseable, you shall have the preference.'

I had long before, decided in my own mind upon this business; and a letter from Yorkshire inclosing two hundred pounds, settled the matter at once; the articles were signed and sealed, and I looked upon myself with increased approbation, as manager of a company of comedians.

A few nights preceding my entrance into office, Tony's benefit was announced; by the profits of which he was to discharge his obligation to me, and do many other things too numerous for me to mention, or him to perform.

The morning previous, he attended rehearsal with his pockets full of tickets, and a large bundle of bills under his arm, which, added to the support of his small-clothes and ivory-headed cane, completely occupied him. Whilst he was stammering through the part of '*Old Hardcastle*' of which he knew not five lines, a gentleman's servant came for twelve box tickets. Exhilarated with so large a demand, Tony repeated the servant's words in a loud key, that the performers might witness his success—'Twelve box tickets! eh, sir!—*Od rabbit it!* I must have some more printed, or I shall not have enough to last the day.' Then laying aside his cane to search for tickets, down dropped the bills; in stooping to reach them, the tickets slipped out of his hand—the small-

clothes were left to their own guidance, and Tony was down on all-fours, collecting his property, amidst the horse-laugh of the performers, and the smiles of the stranger who had caused all this confusion.

‘Too many eggs in one basket, Tony!’ said I—‘Aye,’ replied he, with his usual good humour, but they are not addle eggs, for I’ll hatch them in a moment; then delivering the tickets, he received one pound sixteen shillings in exchange, and, shaking the money exclaimed, ‘Hear how the chickens chirp, you ragged rascals!—I shall cut you all up to-night.’

This expected great night however, did not answer his expectation; the gallery was full of his friends the blacksmiths—the pit tolerable—but the boxes nearly empty.

The next morning he came to me with a long face—‘*Od rabbit it!* I can’t pay you a farthing.’

‘No! why, you had a good benefit.’

‘A paper house, sir—a paper house.’

‘What do you mean?’

‘Why all tickets—not cash enough to pay for the candles. It was a meeting of my creditors; they have paid themselves, and I having nothing to receive—scarcely sufficient to pay the manager’s charges; but Worcester would do the job—the *glovers* will stick by me; besides, I’m going to turn Roman Catholic, and that is sure to do the business at Worcester.’

I expressed my disapprobation at his want of principle, and remonstrated on the impiety of making religion a cloak to cover his mercenary views. ‘Besides where was the policy? If he meant to affect a *shew* of religion, why would not the protestant interest serve his turn?’

‘How little you know of the Old Bailey! I never knew an actor that was a papist, fail in a benefit where that religion was at all profest. There’s Malachy Durravan, for instance; in this place there’s scarcely any of his persuasion, and he won’t have the charges; but mark the difference at Worcester. Do

you think old Roger Kemble and his family would have risen thus rapidly in the world, independently of their being catholics? Not they indeed; and if I had held up the pope's supremacy, some years ago, I had not now been poor *Tony Lebrun* a strolling player, but *Mr. Lebrun, in large characters, for a few nights only, Od rabbit it!* I know what I'm about my boy; and if I don't pay you at Worcester, 'spit in my face and call me horse'—that's all.' So saying, he pulled up his small clothes, flourished his cane and left me.

Behold me now at Worcester in 1781, as great in my own opinion as a general at the head of an army.

What a strange being is man! The deeds of yesterday are subjects of reprobation to day. What was esteemed an act of prudence some years past, appears at this moment an act of insanity. Young, unsuspecting, sanguine in expectation, and precipitate in decision, I looked forward to certain fame and fortune. The little patrimony that might have procured a safe harbour in the worst of times, was now in part, sacrificed for shadows that eluded the grasp; the substance was gone—never to return!

The first night's receipt in Worcester, with an excellent company and two popular pieces, amounted to seven pounds, and that mostly at half price—a ruinous system in country towns; the first three acts of the play are frequently performed to empty benches, and the fourth interrupted by the entrance of half pay.

The more I saw of Powel, the more eccentric his character appeared. He had a great ambition to be thought an economist; a character he had, at that time, fewer pretensions to than any man living, and this in a particular manner shewed itself in his moments of intoxication, which happened regularly every evening. He was a good actor in spite of his shrill, discordant voice; but much dependance could not be placed on his stability.



One evening, Mr. Penn, who should have played the very long part of *Dormer* in 'A Word to the Wise,' was suddenly taken ill. Powell had frequently performed the part—but where to find him? It was then five o'clock, and the curtain was to draw up at seven; there was no time to be lost, and out I sallied on this difficult expedition. Tavern after tavern I cautiously examined, but without success; at last I called at a house of general and respectable resort, kept by Mr. Granger—a man in high estimation amongst all who knew him. As I entered, I heard Powel's shrill pipe, calling for a large quantity of punch; and following the sound, found him surrounded by smokers. When I had dispersed the cloud, by waving my hat, I discovered him, with a long pipe—his little scratch wig nearly the wrong side before—with his pot companion (one of the actors) seated at his right hand, laughing at his jokes, and assenting with much complacency, to whatever Manager Powel chose to advance.

I urged the state of the play—that we could do no other at so short a notice nor even that without his assistance.

'My assistance, my dear fellow!—what is to become of the punch? I have ordered a crown bowl—a serious concern and I am too loyal a subject to desert the *Crown*.

This speech was followed by a loud laugh from his neighbour, whilst Powel's little eyes sparkled with pleasure at this successful hit.

I now found that though I possibly might persuade him to come to the theatre, it would be a physical impossibility to get through so long a part in his then situation. Greatly embarrassed, I proposed to apply to a Mr. Williamson, whom we had engaged for a few nights; but who having demanded greater terms than were in the original agreement, had withdrawn himself. This man, I told Powel, could do the part,

and though it would lay us under the necessity of yielding to his terms, it would be better to sacrifice a few pounds, than by dismissing the house, bring disgrace upon the theatre. Though I was not aware of it, this was attacking Powel in a vulnerable part; he mounted his economic hobby, and the moment I mentioned Williamson, and the loss of a few pounds; jumped up, snatched his hat, got hold of my arm, and we were in the street in an instant. As we went staggering along, he exclaimed, 'Williamson be d——d! pay him for playing *Young Dormer*, whilst I am in the company! No—no!'

By this time we reached the theatre; the gallery entrance was open, and he insisted on examining the door-keepers, to see if the checks were right; 'for,' said he, 'my dear boy, they are common robbers, and if I was not to keep a sharp eye upon them, what would become of our property? That's the way to look at the matter'—a favourite expression of his.

It so happened, that twelve or fifteen girls of the town—tag-rag and bob-tail—were amongst the crowd at the door. As soon as Powel spied them, he got upon the gallery stairs, and called out, 'Walk in, ladies, you have nothing to pay—This way, my pretty girls!' Up they clattered, Powel waving his hat and crying, 'Poor girls!—poor girls!'

I stood motionless, at a loss to account for this act of insanity; but he soon relieved me, by laying it all to the score of economy. 'My dear fellow,' said he, as he went behind the scenes, 'you are young in the business, and are not aware of the service I have done you. These poor girls you know, have all their paramours and bullies—they could not afford to pay to-night; but what will be the consequence on Wednesday? Why, they come with each her swain, and fill the gallery; and thus *the property* will be benefitted—that's the way to look at the matter.

Am not I right, Romney?" I readily assented; as I should have done to any thing, rather than retard his dressing—to expedite which was a task that required no common address.

'This coat,' he said, 'is too good, and ought only to be worn on particular occasions; *the property* would be ruined, if I did not look after it.' The hair-dresser now arrived, with his best tie-wig in full powder, which he immediately seized, and beat about the poor man's head, till we were nearly in a state of suffocation, exclaiming, '*Young Dormer* in a full-dressed wig, you d——d idiot! Have you been hair-dresser to the company these ten years, an' know no better yet? Get out you scoundrel, and bring my *best scratch*.'

At length we got him dressed, and to my utter amazement, he went through the part without deviating in a single instance, from the author. His acting that night, was wild, in many instances unnatural—but when I consider the state of his brain, it was wonderful. The audience were bountiful of their applause, and not at all aware of his situation; but, in the last act a circumstance occurred which ended the play rather prematurely.

Powel was a great advocate for energy; he could not bear what he called, 'a still-lived actor.' When one of this description was speaking, if he happened to be at the wing, he would gnash his teeth, stamp his foot, twist his wig round, and bawl out loud enough for the audience to hear, 'Throw it out man—throw it out!' This eventful evening, Manager Powel was particularly energetic; in making an *exit* in the fifth act, with more than usual animation, his right shoulder struck against the wing, and shook out one of the lamps. Powel called loudly for the lamp-lighter; but no one obeying the summons, he very deliberately wiped up the oil with his cambric handkerchief, lest the ladies' trains should be spoiled,

and thereby *the property* injured. He had scarcely finished this mistaken act of economy, when the prompter (poor Adam Smith) called out, 'Mr. Powel, the stage waits—you are wanted for the last scene.'

Alarmed to agitation, he crammed the greasy, grimy, savory piece of cambric into his coat pocket, and hurried to the scene of action. Forgetting amidst his energies, the disaster of the oil, and warmed perhaps, with his late exertion, he unthinkingly drew forth this fatal handkerchief, and applied it to his face; his countenance after this application, set gravity at defiance. The amiable heroine whom he was addressing with all the enthusiasm of love, turned up the stage to conceal her mirth; the whole party caught the infection—it flew round the house like electricity, and we dropped the curtain, amidst convulsions of laughter and roars of applause.

There is an incident somewhat similar to this in one of our modern comedies, exchanging oil for ink; which very likely, took its rise from the above anecdote.

After the play Powel returned to the crown bowl of punch, at his friend Granger's, and was met next morning in the broad face of day, going home with a lighted lantern.

Another instance of Powel's ideal economy I must relate.

He and Mrs. Powel left Wolverhampton three days previous to the general move; and when our party arrived at the second stage, I was not a little surprised to see him, apparently domesticated at the inn, for he and the landlord were very sociably smoking their pipes at the door.

After handing Mrs. R—— into the house, he took me aside, and asked after *the property*. Had I 'passed the waggon on the road? The greatest care was necessary—we must sail near the wind—take the guineas prisoners. Worcester, with care and econo-

my, would do great things ; leave all to me my dear boy—you are young and thoughtless ; for instance, you are posting all the way—a pretty expense ; on the contrary, I and Mrs. Powel got into a return chaise for a third of the money ; and we are now waiting for another ; that's the way to look at the matter—leave all to me and I'll bring you through.' I learnt afterwards, that whilst he was waiting for a returned chaise, he incurred a bill at the inn that would have doubly paid for posting. But this was not all ; being advertised in the first play, and waiting in vain till the last moment, he engaged a *chaise and four*, which triumphantly set him down at the theatre, just time enough to dress for his part.

Some years subsequent, when reduced to almost abject poverty, a relation of Mrs. Powel died and left them a handsome property. I never saw him afterwards ; but am informed his parsimony almost equalled the miserable Elwes ; that the door was kept constantly locked, and the front window shutters closed, to prevent the approach of old acquaintance ; and that this passion of avarice kept increasing till the period of his death, which I believe took place some years ago, in the city of Worcester.

Many of my theatrical readers will remember PENN with some degree of pleasure ; for he was an actor above the common stamp. He had the grand requisites—an expressive eye, features well calculated to pourtray the passions, and a strong, articulate voice. In opposition to these advantages, his person was awkward and his deportment ungraceful ; he had neither the appearance nor the gait of a gentleman ; in consequence of being brought up a school-master, he was pedantic in the extreme. Could these disadvantages have been corrected or overlooked, Penn would have been in high estimation, and ranked before many first-rate actors of his day. He was however a great favourite in the country—made good

benefits, and might have done very well, had not that destructive companion dissipation, robbed him of the comforts enjoyed by those who take prudence for their guide. Seldom had he a decent coat; in lieu of which, he generally wore a great coat buttoned to the chin, which served to conceal the forlorn state of his linen. His slow methodical mode of speaking gained him the appellation of *Podo*. Regularly every morning at twelve o'clock, he entered the doors of a small public house in the vicinity of the theatre, and with folded arms, knit brows, and a side-look at the landlady, he beckoned three distinct times; then pointing to his mouth, gave full intimation of his wants. A glass of real Nantz, followed by an approving smack of the lips, gave a rich sparkle to his eye, and a firmness to his nerves, which before this application were languid and relaxed; then, turning slowly, and pointing to the cupboard door, behind which his account was kept, he marched out, nor uttered a syllable during the whole negotiation.

Some people there are, who cannot pronounce the *r*, others misplace the *v* and *w*; the *l* is sometimes substituted for the *n*; which gives an articulation similar to that of a person who has by some calamity lost the roof of his mouth. Of this latter description was *Podo's* landlady. I had heard of his long score behind the cupboard door, and called to give her a caution.

'Does Mr. Penn ever talk of paying you?' said I.

'Lo, sir,' she replied, 'he lever talks at all.'

I then advised her to chalk no more till the other was rubbed out.

Penn went the next day, as usual—beckoned—pointed to his mouth; but it would not do.

'I'll tell you what, Master Pell,' said this dealer in drams, 'it siglifies lothilg talkilg—you ald me must have a reckolilg—eighteel shillilgs ald eight pelce halfpelly is your score; ald Master Romley, the ma-

lager of your compaly, has beel here, ald he says, I must lot score alother loggil of gil, till the other's rubbed off.'

Penn, on hearing this, uttered the interjection 'Oh!'—turned upon his heel, and walked away.

Notwithstanding the excellence of our company, the business by no means answered my expectations. The *sharing*, on an average did not amount to more than half-a-guinea per week. Throughout the kingdom, the sharing plan was at this period nearly general; I soon became acquainted with the principle, and found it an iniquitous business, which in as few words as possible, I shall explain.

The manager claims a right to five shares, four of which are called *dead shares*; two for his care and trouble—two for clothes and scenes, and one for acting; added to this, there is a stalking horse—under the semblance of which, the manager if so disposed, can rob and plunder at pleasure—which is called '*A Stock Debt*.' In times of success, such as races, fairs, &c. the great man makes a mighty grasp, and pockets perhaps, fifty, sixty, or an hundred pounds. This theatrical bugbear had no doubt, its origin in justice; but it was so frequently prostituted to base purposes, as to become proverbial in all *companies*, that 'the stock debt is never paid.'

In times of bad business, the manager is obliged to lend money out of his private purse to discharge the bills at the conclusion of a season, which the receipts have not enabled him to do. These are looked upon, and justly too, as debts from the company to the manager, which he has a right to take up whenever success will permit. When I purchased into this scheme, 'the stock debt' amounted to four hundred pounds, incurred in the time of old Whiteley, to whom this circuit formerly belonged; but I have been told by actors, who were many years in the company, that this enormous debt had been paid

over and over again ; yet the sum total still remained upon record, and was a feasible excuse for a handsome deduction at the close of a lucky week. In this case there is no appeal—the manager is the only umpire.

It is related that after a very successful race week, Whiteley gave his performers a guinea each for their share ; but one of them with becoming spirit remonstrated ‘What, sir, only one guinea! I expected three at least.’

‘A heavy stock debt, my dear.’

‘Stock debt, sir!—a mean excuse to rob us of our earnings.’

‘Eh! what’s that you say my dear?—Talk of robbing! why, you would rob a church!—you are a common swindler, my dear—you get money under false pretences; when you came to me, you said you were an actor, my dear.’

‘Well sir, and so I am. Did not you yourself say the people thought me a very promising actor?’

‘People! What people my dear?—your washerwoman and tailor? Yes, I dare say, they have found you a *very promising* actor; for promises are all they could ever get from you. You an actor! my dear—why you are a common pauper that go about the country picking the pockets of the people—the women run to the hedge my dear, and gather in the clothes, when you are coming. My company are all gentlemen—you were a naked, shirtless being, when you came to me—your lousy look set me a scratching, when first I beheld your cut-me-down countenance, and put me in mind of a gibbet. You an actor!—why I could — a better actor than you. You are a pustule, an excrescence, a fistula in the anus of acting, my dear.’

Whiteley was perhaps one of the strangest mortals that ever lived, and said more what are called good things, than any man I ever heard of ; there can



be but one reason for their not being handed down to posterity, and that is, their excessive grossness and brutality.

There happened at this period, a serious contest for pre-eminence between two tragedy queens, Mrs. Nunns and Mrs. Mason; they were pretty equally supported by their partisans, who came to hiss and applaud, alternately; under different signatures I filled the newspapers with puffs pro and con, which promoted the interest of the theatre and kept alive public curiosity. It was really laughable to hear the bursts of applause which followed the speeches of *Roxana* and *Statira*, *Alicia* and *Jane Shore*. A stranger would absolutely have thought the audience mad, and very justly have said to himself, 'What is all this for? I see no uncommon merit to call forth this enthusiasm.' To speak with candour, neither of these heroines soared above mediocrity; but party prejudice aided by a few inflammatory puffs, kept the house in an uproar, and brought money to the treasury. This however, could not last long; when the furor ceased the benefits commenced, and the season concluded without profit.

I had nearly forgot to mention, that at this time there appeared a phenomenon in the theatrical hemisphere, in the person of Rebecca Richards, now Mrs. Edwin. She could not be more than twelve years of age; yet her delineation of character was wonderful—her figure beautifully *petit*—her complexion clear, her features animated; and, whilst she captivated all eyes in the 'Irish Widow,' or the 'Fine Lady' in 'Lethe;' she called forth irresistible admiration in 'Maria,' the 'Ephesian Matron,' and 'Dorcas' in 'Thomas and Sally,'—I am convinced, had the idea occurred to her parents, which has since been so successfully exemplified in young Betty, she would have possessed equal attraction; but then, it had never entered the heart of man to conceive,

that the world were to be *duped* in the manner they have lately been.

Ludlow was the next town in rotation, and being a small place where much could not be expected, the greatest and most respectable part of the company steered another course. This loss we supplied by the introduction of Mrs. and Miss Collins—the latter lady was afterwards at Drury-lane, and is now the respected wife of Mr. Woodfall; Mr. Keys, his wife and family; Mr. Long, commonly called *Bonny Long*, who had the misfortune to be born with five fingers on each hand, of the same length—his wife and nine children; Mr. Weston, Mr. Hervey, and Mr. Spragg.

The indifference of the Worcester season, which was in general the sheet anchor, had such an effect upon Powel's *sober* reflections, that he made a proposal to sell his share for the sum I had engaged to give Pero. This was a desirable event to my ambitious mind. *Sole Manager!* conveyed a degree of consequence which set the difficulty of attainment at naught. The miseries I had to struggle with, in procuring money to make good the payments when they became due, even if I could raise sufficient for the deposit, never struck me, and I ran headlong into almost certain ruin with my eyes open, ambition having cast a film over them which nothing but misfortune could dispel. Mr. Weston being possessed of a little money, offered to lend me one hundred pounds; and a Mr. L——, who *then* professed abundant friendship, came forward with another. These two hundred pounds were deposited in the hands of Powel's attorney, and I engaged to pay the remainder in six and twelve months.

Behold me now uncontrouled manager of this—I was led to believe, money-getting scheme!

When I look back upon this period of my life, it appears to have been governed either by *necessity* or

*madness* ; for no person who was not impelled by one of these causes, would have involved himself as I did ; but I was an easy, credulous fool—an instrument for designing people to play upon ; and this is the only way I can now apologize to myself, for a fatal blow to my future welfare.

The *sharing* plan had always been my aversion ; to remedy this I made a proposal to try the town of Ludlow, upon small salaries of half-a-guinea, fifteen shillings, and a guinea, according to the merit and utility of the different performers. This was cheerfully agreed to, and we arrived in safety at this romantically picturesque place.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## "ALL IN THE WRONG."

MURPHY.

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"Oh! that a man might know  
 The end of this day's business, 'ere it come!  
 But it sufficeth, that the day will end,  
 And then the end is known." "Julius Caesar."

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LUDLOW is in point of situation, equal, perhaps superior, to most towns in England. The ruins of the castle form the principal feature in a landscape truly grand. 'Twas on this classic ground the immortal Milton composed his beautiful *'Masque of Comus.'* We cannot say, he was inspired by the beauties of the surrounding scenery; for, alas! his visual orbs were involved in perpetual darkness, in contrast, it should seem, to the divine light which irradiated his mind: perfectly independent of this circumstance, he soared in flights, beyond the common 'ken,' sublimely reaching even the abode of angels. In a field, on the opposite side the river, is a stately avenue, beneath whose sombre foliage, tradition says, Barnwell murdered his uncle. For the truth or falsehood of this record, I do not pretend to vouch, nor is it materially of consequence; the play, whether composed of fiction or reality, is a work of merit; but

'tis a question with me, 'whether this tragedy has done as much good, as the 'Beggars Opera' has done hundreds of mankind.

My wife and little Fanny in a delightful rural lodging, I thought it behoved me to pay attention to *the property*. Accordingly, I walked towards the suburbs leading to Worcester, in hopes of meeting the waggon which contained the scenery, wardrobe, &c. At the entrance of the town, I observed a concourse of people collected round a four-wheeled carriage, which moved slowly, and, on its approach, I found to my surprise, it was *the property*; and such an exhibition!—had the carter endeavoured to excite a mob, he could not have done it more effectually, than by the manner in which he had packed the load. Some scenes and figures, belonging to a pantomime, lay on the top of the boxes, which were numerous, and piled very high. To keep them steady he had placed a door, on which was painted in large characters, 'Tom's Punch House,' in front of the waggon; this soon gave a title to the whole. Upon the uppermost box, and right over the door, was a giant's head of large dimensions, whose lower jaw being elastic hung, opened with every jolt of the carriage. By the side of this tremendous head rode our large mastiff, who, enraged at the shouts of the mob, barked, and bellowed forth vengeance. The letters on the door, had, of course, stamped it for a puppet-show; to corroborate which, the impudent carter, somewhat in liquor, had placed a pasteboard helmet on his head, whilst, with awkward gesticulation, he thumped an old tambourine to the no small amusement of the spectators. To finish the farcical physiognomy of this fascinating group, Bonny Long, his wife and nine children, sat in the rear—Bonny in a large cocked hat—his wife, with a child at her breast, wrapped in a Scotch plaid, and the other eight, in little red jackets. As soon as I beheld the

comic effect produced by this *tout ensemble*, I slipped down a back street, to avoid the share of applause I should doubtless have received, if recognized as owner of the property.

I was waiting at the theatre with some impatience, when the stage-keeper came running to inform me, that the waggon was overturned, and Mr. Long killed. In an instant I was on the spot, and sure enough there lay the contents of the cart, and Bonny Long under the whole; the crowd had considerably increased, some were humanely employed in lifting off boxes, in order to release the sufferer, others supported his wife, who, though safe from the fall, was in fits for the fate of her husband; whilst the eight little brats in scarlet jackets, ran about like dancing dogs, prepared for a stage exhibition. Mr. Long's voice was plainly heard, and after the removal of sundry packages, one of his hands appeared through a hole in the aforesaid door; the sight of this limb, to which five fingers were attached, alarmed those whom humanity had brought to our assistance; one in particular, starting back, swore he would have nothing farther to do in the business, for there was a mis-shapen man, he might be the devil for aught he knew, who had popped out a hand with *five fingers*, and he supposed the cloven foot would follow.

Poor Long was at length liberated, with no other inconvenience, than what was occasioned by the suffocating dust, arising from the old scenes, which had completely preserved him from the pressure of the boxes. The only misfortune this accident caused, was the death of our watchful mastiff; this noble creature, when the waggon overturned, kept the men at bay, lest his master's property should be purloined, till a blacksmith, who had been drawn from his anvil, and stood gazing with the sledge hammer on his shoulder, gave the poor animal a blow behind the ear, which put a sudden period to his existence.

This callous cyclop was at my suit arraigned on the following day before a magistrate, who acquitted him on the Blacksmith's plea of self defence.

The theatre was a miserably poor place, and when filled, would *scarcely* contain twenty pounds; we opened it the following Monday, with the comedy of 'The Beaux Stratagem,' the receipts amounted to 5*l*. and though the company were much reduced, I found a continuance of such receipts would disable me from paying the salaries; the second and third nights were not much better, and the third week, I found myself under the unpleasant necessity of addressing the company, and placing them on the old establishment. The houses, instead of improving, went from bad to worse; dissatisfaction generally prevailed, 'the sharing was not an existence;' this I very readily allowed, but surely no blame could be attached to me; in vain I urged the small receipts, and heavy disbursements; one more witty than the rest, chose to exercise his humour at my expense, and on the following day, was seen walking down the street, with his five shilling share, in a canvass purse, at the end of his stick, placed over his right shoulder; *jocularly* informing every one who inquired, that his last week's *share* was so heavy, his arm ached with its weight. This sarcasm hurt me *greatly*, I determined to convince the company of the real state of affairs, and that instead of *sharing* five *shil*lings, had I acted with the prudence that became my situation, there would have been nothing; for this purpose I convened the male part of the company to a tavern, where I attended with the stock book for public inspection; but strange to tell! though I was every thing bad behind my back, not a creature had spirit enough to open it; all was amicable, all was right.

Ludlow races now approached, and great expectations were formed; overflowing houses were pro-

mised, and I vainly hoped it would be in my power to make amends for the miserable pittance they had hitherto received. But here, as in most of my undertakings, fortune dashed down the cup of hope, just as I was raising it to my lip.

On the first race night, a ball opposed the theatre, and the receipts were so trifling, it was not thought proper to perform. To make amends for this, I applied to the stewards to patronize the next night, but this could not be effected, the grand ordinary dinner was to be that evening, and would detain the company till a late hour. As there were only two days races, I was now at my wits end; the only probable way of drawing them to the theatre, was to perform in the morning. Again I waited on the stewards, and obtained their consent, and promised attendance. Accordingly 'The Castle of Andalusia,' was advertised by desire of the stewards of the race, to begin at eleven o'clock; this new and unpleasant time of performance, was particularly irksome; to shut out day light, to substitute candles for the glorious sun on a hot summer's morn, appeared little better than sacrilege, but there was no alternative between this and empty benches; the time arrived, and with this *astonishing patronage*, we raised *eleven pounds!* This was an effort on the part of the town, that was naturally followed by additional depression. The *gaiety and fatigue of two days races*, completely overwhelmed the theatre. The benefits were now our only resource, and even that bore a melancholy aspect, but they would just fill up the time, previous to Worcester races, the profits of which, I was told, never failed to be great.

At this time, I received a letter from Mr. Smith, one of the proprietors of Wolverhampton theatre, couched in terms of strong persuasion; he was certain, if I brought my company to the fair, my receipts could not be less than two hundred pounds. This



was a strong temptation ! A means of making good all our losses now presented itself ; yet, if it failed, the expense of removing such a body of people was what I had it not in my power to sustain. I consulted the performers ; they were sanguine as myself, and as I never looked on the dark side of things, I speedily embarked in this troublesome and expensive undertaking ; but the anxiety of mind that attended the removal of this unfortunate company, with their still more unfortunate manager, is indescribable !

We arrived without accident, and the theatre was advertised to open on the Monday. Had I been as well acquainted as I am now, with the description of people who attend fairs, especially merry-making fairs, I should never have undertaken this disastrous journey. A play is by much too refined and expensive an entertainment, to suit either the taste or pockets of gaping country people, who in general, have not an idea beyond a mountebank, or a puppet show. Of this, I had every night woeful experience, three, four, and five pounds, were the customary receipts. In a state of mind bordering on distraction, I went over to Birmingham, and by way of forcing a house, for the last night, engaged *Messrs. Grist, Banks, and Barrymore* to perform in 'Othello,' and 'Rosina,' for which I was to give them each a guinea, and pay the chaise hire.

The receipts of that night, with all this *great acting*, amounted to seven pounds!!! out of which I had to pay these gentlemen three guineas, besides travelling expenses!!!

I have known actors, aye, and poor ones too, who would have received the three guineas with some appearance of regret ; nay, there are those, who would not have taken them at all ; but these *great* people were superior to such *little* prejudices ; they not only received them with ease and good humour, but the *greatest* man of the three made a famous good story

of it, to the great delight of his auditors, in the Birmingham green room next day.

Yet so blind was I to the narrowness of their conduct, that the supper bill, (no small one, it may be supposed, when 'tis recollected who composed the party) I discharged, under an idea of gentlemanly hospitality, a prejudice which ought to have died with my shipwrecked fortune.

The hour of departure arrived, and thirty pounds, the whole of the week's receipts, were all I had to satisfy the actors, by lending each a little, and a long train of incidental expenses incurred by the journey, beside chaises to carry us back, and maintenance on the road.

This was the greatest difficulty I had ever experienced; to wait upon the different tradesmen with apologies instead of money, was, to a man of my temperament, grating beyond all description. However, there was no alternative. When I told my story they were gentle and kind, and would patiently wait my own time of payment. Credit for chaises to transport us back was likewise cheerfully granted, and we left Wolverhampton, after this inauspicious week, minus about fifty pounds!

The benefits immediately commenced at Ludlow, and each performer contrived to clear a trifle; but Bonny Long outdid them all. He was a decent actor, and had a most retentive memory, which rendered him highly useful; above all, he was an honest, good-tempered man. As soon as his benefit was announced, Mrs. Long washed her eight children, and dressed them in their scarlet spencers, which never made their appearance, except at benefits, and their first arrival in a town. At the head of this little tribe, she paraded the streets, in her Scotch plaid, with a large bundle of play-bills, and solicited custom at every respectable dwelling. The novelty of these *little red run-about*s, added to the good humour and

affability of the father, brought an overflowing house; and so much was honest Bonny respected, there was not an individual in the theatre who did not rejoice as his success. On this evening, one of Long's children, about six years old, was advertised to speak an address, written for the occasion. At the end of the play, the curtain drew up—out waddled the rickety baby, and began, 'Ladies and gentlemen'—here was a long pause—the mother held up her hand in a threatening posture, and called out, 'Go on, you slur!'—but it would not do. The little thing scratched her head, began to sidle and pout, and at last exclaimed loud enough to be heard by the whole house, 'I want to ha—ha!' Thus ended the address, and down dropped the curtain.

I had now been nine months joint and sole manager, and had incurred debts to the amount of one hundred pounds—Pero's first payment was due, and ruin stared me in the face.

I forgot to mention the departure of Tony Lebrun. His benefit at Worcester, had been unproductive; he apologized to me, as usual, and left us to join his old friend Watson at Cheltenham, where the Duke of Buccleugh would certainly patronise his benefit, and then I should be paid. Poor Tony! he was a famous castle-builder, and enjoyed things in perspective, which were never realized, but added much I believe, to his happiness.

My present forlorn situation brought Tony's advice to my mind. I found I was not cast in a managerial mould; but there was no retreating—sink or swim, I must go on.

Worcester race-week netted about fifty pounds, thirty of which I appropriated to the liquidation of my debts at Ludlow, and then prepared for an encampment at Gloucester.

Powel, who had played with us during this week, proposed accompanying us, and if he could be of any

service in looking after *the property*—‘You know, my dear boy,’ said he, ‘I am to be depended upon.’ I accepted his offer with thanks ; and, as a first mark of his attention, he called me aside on the last play night, and said, ‘My dear fellow, I have hit on a plan of conveyance to Gloucester, which will save considerable expense.’

As I had no great opinion of his travelling arrangements, the business of the returned chaise at that moment recurring to my recollection, I formed no flattering expectations from this scheme. However, I requested to hear it.

‘Why, I have, my dear boy, engaged a hackney-coach. Now, you know, hackney means common, and what is common is generally cheap. This said coach will take both our families for thirty shillings ; whereas, two chaises would cost two pound ten—and twenty shillings saved, is a serious consideration. That’s the way to look at the matter ; only leave it to me—I’ll take care of the main chance.’

Accordingly I left it to him ; and at seven o’clock on the following morning, an old, crazy-looking vehicle, in which were Powel, his wife and two children, stopped at our lodgings ; whence we set off, at a very slow rate, for Upton-upon-Severn.

About half way, we observed a lusty, portly looking man, standing at the door of a decent looking public house, in a travelling dress. Powel no sooner saw, than he recognized him—‘My dear fellow,’ said he, ‘your fortune’s made ; that gentleman is Lord Surrey’s steward, a person of great influence at Gloucester.’ He now stopped the coach, and both getting out, I was formally introduced to his Lordship’s steward, as manager of the theatre ; and, over a large bowl of milk punch, Powel was elaborate in praise of the company, and my spirit and liberality, as conductor of it. We had lost nearly an hour in this interview, when I reminded my loquacious com-

panion of the females in the coach—‘Odso! that’s well thought of’—and desiring me to pay, we resumed our journey.

‘Now, my dear fellow,’ said Powel, ‘we have done more good than you are aware of. Lord Surrey will *bespeak* a play, by which you will get twenty pounds, and all for two bowls of milk punch!—that’s the way to look at the matter!’

From this delay and the weakness of the two poor horses, it was twelve o’clock ’ere we reached Upton, where we ordered dinner, and whilst it was preparing Powel conducted our party to a cyder loft where he had performed with Mrs. Siddons; it was a most inconvenient place, and so low that my head nearly reached the ceiling. There was some comfort, tho’ of a negative kind, in hearing that the first people in the profession had struggled through difficulties as well as myself.

Two managers by the names of Crump and Chamberlain, formerly travelled with a small itinerant company, through this part of England. The former was a blunt, morose, brutish, character; the latter, sly and cunning; they were commonly known by the names of *Fox* and *Bruin*. In the early part of John Kemble’s theatrical career, he was unfortunate enough to be a member of this company. After much mental and pecuniary suffering, he made a precipitate retreat, leaving the following couplet chalked upon the theatrical barn door:

“I fly to shun impending ruin,

“And leave the Fox to fight with Bruin.”

It was ten o’clock ’ere we reached our destination, and including milk punch and the dinner expenses, had cost more than posting, besides the tediousness of the conveyance and loss of time; in short, the expedition was one of Powel’s eccentricities, and answered in the usual way.

The Gloucester theatre was at this time in Barton-street, a melancholy inconvenient place, which when filled, would not hold more than thirty-five pounds. To this dungeon it was difficult to draw the people, but that no attraction might be wanting, I engaged Mrs. Hasker, Miss Scrace (since Mrs. Bates, of Drury Lane) and Mr. Blanchard, from the Bath theatre, being then in the vacation. They were all three of first rate abilities; but, alas! Death has long since seized her victims—so long, that perhaps the two former are scarcely remembered in the annals of the drama except by professors. The latter was universally known, and will be remembered with regret by all those who prefer nature to art. He was indeed, Nature's own child; his style has never been equalled since the time of Weston, nor will it ever be surpassed. Poor Tom! 'I knew him well—a fellow of infinite jests, of most excellent fancy. Where are all your flashes of merriment that used to set the table in a roar?'—Alas! we may trace to that source perhaps, his early fate! Habits of dissipation not only destroy the constitution, but the amiable, social, domestic virtues sink before it. But for this one fault, poor Tom Blanchard might now have been an ornament to the stage, and an amiable member of society; for both stations he was equally qualified.

Near the close of his life, about ten years subsequent to this period, Stephen Kemble engaged him to perform a few nights at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and knowing that little dependance could be placed on poor Blanchard's sobriety, he invited him on the first play day, to a tete-a-tete dinner in the green room, determined not to lose sight of him till the play was over; 'Hodge was the part he had to perform, in which no one could surpass him. Two glasses of brandy and water after dinner, were cheerfully allowed, but no entreaty could prevail for a third, and all Tom's hopes of intoxication were at an end.

Stephen was 'fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils,' in other words he had no music in his soul, (a family failing) Blanchard knew this; he likewise knew, that he could execute a plaintive ditty in a *composing* style; and after his budget of anecdote was nearly exhausted, he determined to try its effects on the manager; it answered to his wish; before the second verse of Lullaby was finished, Stephen was in the arms of Somnus, and Tom at the brandy bottle; when the former awoke, he found the latter reeling about the room, and the prohibited flask empty. Sense is frequently sacrificed to sound, but in this instance music was completely triumphant.

Miss Serace, (sister to Mrs. Smith, who some years ago, was well known as a genteel comic actress) was a young lady of first rate abilities, she was extremely elegant in the woman of fashion, and very fascinating when habited *en cavalier*.

Mrs. Hasker had great vocal powers; both these ladies died young, and the stage mourns their loss.

For the short time these three exotics remained, our theatre was respectably attended, and the sharing amounted to a guinea per week. They had each a good benefit, and left us to work our passage through the remainder of the season as well as we could; bad enough it proved, and I determined to cut it short, according to Powel's advice. 'Cut and run,' said he; 'it won't do—the property will be injured; if they won't come and see us here, let us go elsewhere—that's the way to look at the matter, my boy.' The benefits were very indifferent, even the *red spencers* were without attraction; mine was the only one that produced any thing of consequence, and that was chiefly owing to the new opera of 'Robin Hood,' and the last night of performing. Thirty four pounds was a great house in Barton-street, and though it was only as a drop of rain to a bason of water, in my multifarious wants, yet it did some good.

At this time, the institution of Sunday schools was first suggested by Mr. Raikes, printer, in Gloucester. Excellent man ! I think of him with gratitude, and mention his name with respect, almost bordering on adoration.

Of course I have seen this philanthropic being walk to church at seven in the morning followed by at least an hundred children, who but for him, might have lived and died in ignorance, with all its attendant vices. The clergy, strange to say, opposed him, the people in general scarcely approved the plan, or lent assistance towards its success. As an instance, I proposed a benefit play for the charity, and five pounds was the whole receipt of the house!!!

At the end of the season, I was indebted to Mr. Raikes twenty pounds for printing ; upon disclosing the state of my treasury, he took me by the hand, and eased my full heart, by 'requesting his debt might not add to my uneasiness ; if convenient, he begged to hear from me at Worcester, and in the mean time wished me health and success.'

It strikes me *now* with wonder and amazement, that I never attempted to effect an establishment in some of the respectable neighbouring towns ; theatres *then* were by no means so common as they are *now* ; many places of much greater extent and popularity than Ludlow, were not accommodated with theatricals, and I make no doubt would joyfully have received and rewarded our exertions ; but I suppose it was not then the custom to extend the limits of a circuit, else Powel, who was an experienced veteran, would have recommended that measure ; for my own part, such a thing never entered my imagination ; these four miserably bad theatrical towns, were all I seemed to have any right, or interest in, so as a forlorn hope we returned to Worcester some weeks sooner than the commencement of the usual season ; this may perhaps, account for the additional ill for-



tune by which I was attended; even the elements conspired against me. The first night, the snow was so deep and the weather so intense, no one but through necessity would leave their houses, of course we did not perform; the second night we drew up the curtain to ten shillings, half price increased it to three pounds.

When a man is sinking in the stream of adversity, how rarely is a hand stretched forth to his relief! On the contrary, while he is catching at every twig, how many will rather cut away his hold, and with apathetic unconcern, see him overwhelmed by the tide of destruction. I am no misanthrope—my heart expands at the distresses of a fellow-creature, or any other of God's creatures; and my hand though feeble in power, is to the extent of its abilities, raised to succour the oppressed. That friendship is a word oftener expressed than understood, I think, will be generally allowed, particularly amongst the commercial part of our species. Trade, I am sorry to say, has a tendency to narrow the heart, and circumscribe its feelings; it gives a man habits of deception—makes him suspicious; in short, it is a grand enemy to the social and moral virtues. I would not by this philippic, infer, that *all* men of business are thus depraved—God forbid! There are to my narrow knowledge, men in trade who are an honour to their country and themselves; but they are as one to a thousand.

## CHAPTER XV.

"TIS WELL IT'S NO WORSE."

BICKERSTAFF.

"I can get no remedy against this consumption of the purse. Borrowing only lingers and lingers it out; but the disease is incurable."

"Henry IV."—Part II.

"A great man, I'll warrant—I know by the picking of his teeth."

"But I had not so much of man in me,  
But all my mother came into mine eyes,  
And gave me up to tears."

"Henry V."

As, when before a dreadful storm, the clouds collect, ponderous and opaque, the affrighted mariner awaits in awful silence the dreadful burst that menaces destruction—so I, as pilot of my theatrical bark, saw a storm approaching, impossible to weather, and in its destructive effect most certain.

The theatre had been open a fortnight, and the receipts barely sufficient to pay for lights and bills; the prospect in view gave no ray of cheering hope—all was gloomy meditation and despair. Pero's first hundred pounds had been due some time, and he was importunate. Mr. Gosli of Stamford, wrote by the same post, to say, the rents were due, and I must prepare to pay them in a week. To complete dis-

tress and add a climax to misery, my Worcester friend, and Weston, in no very conciliating terms, demanded payment. Like a baited bull—turn which way I would—despair, with haggard aspect, faced me; and, as if my own immediate miseries were not heavy enough to crush me, the supplications of the poor actors drove me almost to a state of frenzy.

Ann's spirit, hitherto invulnerable, sunk beneath such complicated misfortunes. In this forlorn state, without a friend to lend me a guinea—at least none offered, and though poor, I was too proud to ask; for the first time I made application to a pawnbroker not without some degree of false shame, I confess—false, I am convinced it is; for where is the disgrace of raising money on our property? Is it not done daily, though upon a much larger scale, under the title of '*Mortgage*?' Upon my Ann's gold watch, and several articles of valuable plate, I borrowed forty pounds, part of which I disbursed among the actors, who had families; for their case was piteous indeed.

By way of raising one decent house, and shewing the inhabitants if possible, the way to the theatre—which from disuse, I almost thought they had forgotten, I endeavoured to get a play patronized; and as luck—whether good or bad, time must discover—but as luck would have it, the Earl of —, and several other persons of distinction, were then at the Hop Pole, where I understood, they intended to remain a few days. This incident completely routed the Blue Devils, who had of late been my constant companions. I dressed myself in a handsome suit of black, with my best laced ruffles; my hair was put into the most exact trim, and into Foregate-street, I bent my way.

I have always remarked, that the time to carry a point, which depends merely on good humour, is about half an hour after the cloth is drawn. I hit this period to a nicety; every vestige of dinner was

removed, and the great folks as merry over their fruit and wine, as health and prosperity could make them.

I followed a puppy-looking servant up stairs, and heard him announce me as Mr. Romney manager of the theatre; upon which the whole company burst into an immoderate fit of laughter, at the same time repeating the word 'Manager!' in a manner that gave me to understand they entertained no great reverence for the character. 'Oh, the ma-na-ger!' continued his drawling lordship, when laughter would permit; 'shew the ma-na-ger in—he is a *queer bitch*, I dare say—we shall have some *fun* my lady.'

My situation may be better imagined than described. I had frequently addressed persons of rank, and generally found a cheering suavity of manners the characteristic of true nobility; but now, as if fate was determined to oppress me at every point, my feelings were to be harrassed by foppish lordlings, tooth-picking Sir Tommys, and lolling ladies of quality.

Filled with the contempt, that what I heard so justly inspired, I was turning to make a precipitate retreat, when the servant threw open the door, and discovered me. 'Walk in, Mr. Ma-na-ger, if you please,' cried his lordship, nodding significantly at a baronet, who sat at the bottom of the table, and who was leisurely picking his teeth, whilst he turned round in his chair to stare at me. The company consisted of eight gentlemen and four ladies. A degree of disappointment was apparent, when they found their promised source of mirth in some measure defeated. I dare say they had painted the manager as a motley-dressed man, adorned with tinsel, who would servilely cringe and bow, for the favour of being insulted by such honourable brutes. Perceiving their mistake—for I felt so truly indignant that I almost looked down upon them with contempt, and longed for an opportunity of shewing it—they stared at each other, asto-

nished no doubt, at my effrontery, as with a bold, steady step, and much self-possession, I walked up to my lord, and laid before him a list of plays.

‘Oh! aye! plays—my lady, will you *bespeak* a play?’

‘Why really my Lord I have no idea of *strollers*; pray Mr. Manager what sort of a set are yours? sad wretches I suppose. Pray did you ever see Kemble? I am vastly fond of Kemble.’ ‘So am I my lady,’ replied the picktooth Baronet, ‘Kemble is a very fine singer indeed, I have heard him often at the Opera.’ During this time, her ladyship’s eye through a quizzing glass was fixed upon me with steady effrontery. The Baronet continued; ‘have you any fine girls in your troop, Mr. ———, what’s your name?’ ‘Oh fie, Sir Thomas!’ cried her ladyship, ‘how can you name such creatures before me?’

‘Don’t be angry my lady, Mr. Manager here will put us all in good humour I dare say—what can you do that is comical?—can you conjure?’

Unable longer to brook such treatment I retreated towards the door, and thus addressed his Lordship. ‘My Lord, I throw myself on your protection; I am it is true, manager of a company of players, ’tis also true, that I have seen better days, and my feelings may be somewhat more acute on that account. I am well aware my Lord, that superior rank is not always accompanied by superior abilities, but I should think that education, the natural consequence of noble birth, would at least so far enlarge the mind, and liberalize the manners, that the unfortunate would always meet encouragement and support; sympathy, and not insult. My situation at present is very uncomfortable, and attended with a degree of humiliation I am ill calculated to sustain—your Lordship will therefore pardon my abrupt departure.’

I had not been at home ten minutes, when the following note arrived.

‘To Mr. Romney, manager of the theatre.

‘The honourable Miss —, who had the misfortune to witness the inhospitable and unfeeling reception Mr. R—— experienced at the Hop-Pole, acknowledges herself highly pleased with his proper and spirited conduct, and begs his acceptance of the inclosed.’

The inclosure was a 10l. bank bill, and the approving note, written by the hand of a beautiful young woman; such, upon inquiry I found her. Though these little applications gave ease for a moment, the disease was too deeply rooted to be cured by common remedies. Since my arrival at Worcester, I had become suspiciously apprehensive that some of my creditors would arrest me; a circumstance I thought of with much dread.

One night I had just finished my part to an almost empty house, and was preparing to return home, when I received the following note written with a pencil on the back of a play bill.

‘Whilst I am writing this, a Bailiff stands close by me, he has a writ against you, and waits to serve it. Go out the back way, and I will favour your escape.’

Good heaven! what was to be done? if I even got away from them now, the toil was spread, and finally would enclose me: however caution commanded me to keep out of it as long as possible; I therefore put the timely warning in my pocket, and through back lanes and alleys got safe to my lodging. Alarm must have been visibly painted on my countenance, for Ann absolutely started at the sight of me. After an explanation, we were lost in conjecture, respecting the identity of the friendly writer; the note was examined, it was apparently written in the dark, from the crookedness of the lines, and the little connexion some of the words had with each other; after

various unsatisfactory conjectures, Ann starting up, exclaimed, 'my God! 'tis Camelford!' on comparing his former letters with the note, the characters were visibly traced by the same hand, with the difference only of good writing, and bad.

'Here was a new field for speculation! this strange man was again come to light, but though he had favoured my escape now, 'twas out of his power essentially to serve me, for he was poor as myself—perhaps not,—'aye there's the rub,'—perhaps rich—unlawfully so—the more I thought of this wonderful being, the more I feared him, although he held an exalted place in my esteem. I found on mature reflection, that if I wished to avoid incarceration, perhaps for life, I must quit Worcester, to struggle any longer, were vain; one writ I knew was issued, perhaps there, were detainers.

During the three days I confined myself, I pondered on various plans for future subsistence, and endeavoured to arrange matters for our departure.

'The world was all before us, where to chuse,' but money was wanting to facilitate that choice. Half a guinea was the extent of my finances, and five shillings of that, were destined for Long's nine children; however money must be had; we had still some superfluous articles of former grandeur, these together with an excellent violin, were packed off to the pawnbrokers, and produced ten guineas.

I was extremely anxious to see Camelford before my departure, but he came not, and that evening fixed on for our elopement. When the servant returned from Bonny Long's, she rushed precipitately into the apartment, and informed us, that a black-looking man on crutches, whom she had seen about the house several times that day, accosted her with questions relating to me, and when she was closing the door, said 'tell your master to fear nothing—I will protect him—but he must away to night.'

In a moment I guessed the beggar to be Camelford. As our departure was previously arranged for that evening, little further preparation was necessary; our packages were safely lodged at the coach-office, though the route was undetermined. In the afternoon, a friendly attorney called to tell me there were three writs out, and the bailiffs waiting in every avenue leading to the house. In my own person, to escape them was impossible. As a woman, though somewhat of the tallest, in the dark, perhaps, I might elude their vigilance. A petticoat, a grey cloth cloak and bonnet, were procured; and having sent Mrs. R—— to the inn, some time before, at eight o'clock I sallied forth, holding by the servant's arm. The deception seemed to answer; for we passed close to one of my enemies, without notice. But my usual ill luck prevailed—my evil genius still pursued me. Poor little Fan, whom her mistress, in the agitation of the moment had forgotten, was left behind. The faithful animal had been our constant companion for twelve years, and to desert her now was impossible; accordingly the servant was sent back to fetch her.

Whether I had before been suspected by the bailiff whom we had just passed, or whether my creeping into a dark corner raised suspicion, I know not—but at that moment he crossed to where I stood, and whistled to his companion; at the same instant the maid arrived with the dog, which was generally known to be mine. This confirmed what before was only surmise; a lantern which the other fellow brought, was held up to my face, and a discovery, fatal as I thought, to my future freedom, was the consequence. One hold of each arm, I was dragged along with brutal rudeness; and a petition that I might carry my little dog, was answered by damning both the dog and me. The poor thing however, followed at humble distance, its master, whom a prison was yawning to receive.



Arrived at the spunging-house, one of the men was preparing to knock at the door, when three sturdy beggars, in accents of petition assailed us—‘A halfpenny, masters, for the love of heaven!—have compassion on a poor blind sailor, who lost his precious sight in America!—pray, bestow your charity?’—‘Aye that we will,’ said one of my conductors, and aimed a blow at the man next him who appeared to be lame; but nimbly avoiding it he sprang like a lion upon his prey, and with one stroke laid him prostrate. The light was extinguished in the scuffle, and the spunging-house being situated in a retired court, there were no witnesses to the affray.

The stoutest of my conductors lay motionless, and whilst two of the beggars seized the other, who still held me by the arm, the third, by tripping up his heels, released and dragged me away. ‘Fly,’ said he, in well-known accents, ‘as you value your liberty; throw off those disgraceful habiliments, and fly.’—‘Oh, Camelford!’ cried I, grasping his hand, ‘how can I repay you?’

‘By your obedience’—and as he pulled me along he said, ‘Have you got the ring?’

‘Then still preserve it. Set off instantly for Bristol; and when you arrive at the Bush, inquire for ‘the Marquis’—you’ll find me there—Farewell!’

I found my wife at the Blue Bell, extremely agitated at my delay, which was not lessened when informed of the cause. The loss of poor Fanny, too, was an aggravation of our misery. We anticipated every evil that could possibly befall the poor creature, thus torn from her early protectors.

The clock struck ten—we were summoned to the coach; and the first object that greeted us was our faithful dog! One of our fellow travellers informed us, that a sailor-looking man had put her in at the window, just before we came, saying, ‘she belonged to a gentleman and lady who had taken places.’

## CHAPTER XVI.

## "THE RUNAWAY."

MRS. COWLEY.

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"And 'twixt his finger and his thumb he held a pouncet-box, which, ever and anon, he gave his nose."

"Henry IV."

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'Twas in the spring of 1785, when we took leave of Worcester. Not a word passed the lips of any one, till dawn next morning. My companions, from certain nasal symptoms, I conjectured, were buried in the arms of sleep. Happy state! Thoughts of the past, and anxiety for the future, kept my senses awake.

Camelford's last words, so big with mystery, were constantly sounding in my ears, and seemed to be the governing principle, the rallying point, towards which my contemplations turned; for though I endeavoured to drive him from my thoughts and fix them upon something more nearly connected with our future plans, still they reverted back to him; he seemed to be the magnet which at present governed my destiny.

When darkness no longer covered the face of the earth, I discovered our companions in the coach, to

consist of two males and one female; the latter, a portly lady between forty and fifty, with much apparent majesty in her demeanor, from conscious dignity of birth—a matter in her estimation of the greatest importance. She had lately left her mother country and retained enough of the brogue to convince us where it lay.

On the other side, and opposite to me, sat an elderly gentleman, in figure much resembling that respectable personage, '*Mr. Punch.*' His hair was gray, and queu'd at some length—a small cocked hat finished his head; his clothes were a complete suit, nearly white, with silver buttons and long ruffles. He took a great deal of snuff out of an elegant box; and a handsome ring decorated his little finger, which he turned up in great style, when administering the titillating particles to his cock-up nose. He appeared a man of knowledge and liberality; but censured severely, and that in direct terms, any appearance of undue pride or affectation, which he held in utter abhorrence.

The reader will not suppose I drew these characters from the first superficial view, but as they unfolded themselves during the journey. Between these two personages sat a thief-catcher from Worcester; he had formerly been employed in Bow-street and retained all the slang of St. Giles'.

The sun now began to infuse a little spirit into the company. The old gentleman took out his snuff-box and handed it round. I begged leave to admire the neatness and elegance of the workmanship, whilst the Irish lady, drawing up and settling her shoulders and hips in proper form for the day, noticed the box slightly—and remembered when the Duke of Leinster came from the Currough, he presented the Duchess with just such another; and 'that very day, as I was taking *toy* with her Grace she shewed it me. Och! it was *ilegant.*' This grand

display of national pride called forth a significant shrug, and a smile from the old gentleman, who, to change the discourse, turned to the thief-catcher and asked him, 'What news?—had he lately been in town?' 'Vy, sir,' he replied, squirting the tobacco-tainted saliva out of the coach-window, 'I *lives* now in the city of *Vorcester*, but I'm still on the old *lay*, and *nabs* a few now and then.'

'The old *lay*!' exclaimed the gentleman—'what the devil is that? Oh! you are in the law I suppose?'

'No, I *been't*—I'm a good friend to the lawers, though, and find 'em plenty o' *work*. I'm a thief-taker, sir—*vat ve calls* in *Lunnun* a *Runner*—and if they don't give me the *go*, I shall shew a *spice* of my office, before *ve reaches* Bristol.'

'Aye!' replied the other, putting up his gold snuff-box, in some alarm, 'is there any danger of our meeting with robbers on this road?'

'Vy, sir, as to robbers, I can't say much about that there; but if I *been't* mistaken, there *is* three murderers now on the top of the coach.'

The lady began to fidget, and begg'd leave to come over to our side—'This was the first time she had ever been in a stage-coach and it should be the last. People of every description were admitted—and persons of family——'

'D—n family!' cried the old gentleman, what has it to do with this man's story?—What were you saying about murder?'

'Vy, sir, I'll tell you. Last night, about half past eight, two men *was* attack'd, and left for dead—nay, they *be* dead by this time, I suppose—by some people in the disguise of beggars; an old *woman was* of the party, and they all escap'd together; three of them *was* trac'd to this coach, and I am dispatch'd to secure 'em, *vich* I shall do, the moment I *arrives* at Bristol, and can get assistance; for I *understands* they

*be* desp'rate dogs, and *is* now in the disguise of sailors at the top of this here coach.'

To describe my sensations during this harangue would be impossible. Ann desired me, in a language peculiar to ourselves, to keep my handkerchief to my face, in order to hide the various passions which but too plainly spoke my feelings. Camelford on the top of the coach!—liable to imprisonment for murder!—and on my account!—What was to be done? Something I was determined to effect, that would give him intelligence; and whilst the old gentleman enlarged on the danger of attacking three such desperate fellows, I took a leaf from my pocket-book, and wrote with a pencil,

'You are suspected—a myrmidon of the law is in the coach—escape immediately, or at the next stage you will be siez'd.  
S. W. R.'

Pretending to look out of the coach, I pulled the skirt of a sailor's jacket, which hung over the window, at the same time holding up the paper, which was immediately seized, and fortunately without notice; for my companions were too deeply engaged on the same subject that engrossed my *thoughts* to observe my *actions*.

When I could again attend to the discourse, the old gentleman was informing this limb of the law, 'that he was himself a magistrate and would lend his assistance towards the commitment of the culprits.'

In half an hour we reached the place appointed for breakfast. The justice and the runner took the landlord aside, but soon joined us, exclaiming 'The birds are flown!' 'Aye,' continues Kiddy, 'Coachee must have been in league; or how could they have *smoked* my being in this *here* coach; but I'll *do* 'em at Bristol.'

We soon resumed our seats, when the fat lady enlarged on 'the superior comforts of travelling in Ireland, where people of condition were not promiscu-

ously intermingled with the lower orders of society ; for her part she had never associated with thief-takers before.'

At the conclusion of this pompous harangue, the justice striking the top of his box with uncommon energy, took out a pinch and cramming it with his thumb up the left nostril, exclaimed, ' I don't know madam, exactly what you mean by the superior comforts of travelling in Ireland. I have been a traveller for five and forty years, frequently in my own carriage ; but I prefer the variety that a stage-coach affords. The unnatural distance that family pride and imaginary dignity, arising from birth, create, as if the virtue of the parents was handed down to their children, like their sins, is the bane of all rational society, and I generally treat it with the contempt it deserves. As to your talking of the inconvenience of travelling in England, it is quite ridiculous madam ; on the contrary its comforts and conveniences are proverbial all over Europe, and it is a common saying abroad, that ' an English plebian travels like a foreign prince.' But perhaps madam, you are partial to the jaunting car—a vehicle I have often seen in Ireland ; but not being a person of *condition*, never had the *honour* of riding in one.'

' Impertinent !' cried the lady with an indignant toss of the head—' but what else can one expect from thief-takers and their associates.'

Luckily the officer of justice said nothing, but seemed to enjoy this warfare of words, by putting his tongue in his cheek and winking at me at the same time saying, '*Twig the old one !*' To give the conversation a turn, lest the justice should again o'erleap the bounds of good manners, I observed that ' the convenience of English travelling was allowed to excel any thing we hear or read of in other countries ; yet is it not obtained at the expense of humanity !'

' How so, sir ?—how so ?'

‘If it were possible to calculate the mortality of horses, we should find upon comparison, an awful increase during the last thirty years, and chiefly owing to the velocity with which we fly over the country. I should not wonder, if the horses that are killed, exceed the number of those which die a natural death—a melancholy reflection! when we consider the strength, the nobleness, the generosity of that superior animal, who strains every nerve, under the merciless coachman’s lash, till his eye-balls start; foaming perspiration drops from every hair, whilst with wide extended nostrils, he courses over hill and dale, even till his wind cracks, to procure pleasure for *those* who never pity *him*.

At the conclusion of this observation, the justice shut his snuff box, put it leisurely into his pocket, and with his handkerchief, dislodged the dusty particles from his little nose—at the same time looking at me with a kind of pleasing astonishment. ‘Young man,’ said he, ‘your ideas do more credit to your heart than your head. Does not every day’s experience convince you, that habit has so hardened the human mind—so filled it with callosity, that even the distresses of our fellow creatures scarcely excite pity; and the stripes applied to the quivering fibres of the generous horse, are applauded, even by female passengers, and an additional reward given to the brutal coachman for his cruel expedition? Since, then feeling is out of fashion, the wise man and the philosopher shut their eyes and ears occasionally and say to themselves, ‘Tis folly to grieve for what we cannot alter.’

The runner, rolling his *quid*, and giving his head a knowing motion, as much as to say, ‘I know more of this subject than you,’ now spoke:—

‘*Vy*, look you, gemmen, *ven* I *was* groom to Lord *Sandwich*, if so be I saw a horse over-*vork’d*, I *always* threw in a *disbursement* against such goings on—

‘Coachee,’ says I, ‘this here *vor’k von’t* do—*stag* the leader, he’ll lose his *glim*, and then *vat vill* my Lord say? ‘*Vat’s* that *there* to thee?’ says he—so then I gives proper *inflammation*—My Lord *you’d* not be *queer’d*, he *was* in a *bloody* passion, and coachee *was* forced to *sherry*.’

This speech produced a smile from the old gentleman; who after repeating the last words, ‘forced to *sherry*!’ sarcastically observed, ‘What a wonderful difference was given to the character and conversation of individuals, through the channel of education! Oxford, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, and St. Omer’s, had each their peculiar modes of instruction—now you, I should suppose, are a pupil of St. Giles’, which differs from all the rest, not so much in morals perhaps as in pronunciation; for I am sure your last speech would puzzle the square-caps to construe, as much as if it had been spoken in high Dutch.’

At this moment we entered the environs of Bristol, and the officer began to form plans for the apprehension of the men, shewing much respect to the justice, who might greatly assist in the undertaking—‘That I will to the utmost of my power,’ replied he, ‘but we must be cautious—I reside in Bristol, and in my capacity of magistrate, am acquainted with people whose business it is to look after the police, and secure culprits like those you are in search of; so that, amongst you, if the rogues are in Bristol, they cannot escape.’

The coach stopped at the Bush, and the waiter addressed the old gentleman by the title of ‘Alderman,’ who immediately retired with the thief-taker, and left Mrs. R——, myself, and the Irish lady, to amuse ourselves as well as we could; and a very irksome task it was, in my then frame of mind, to support any thing like conversation; for to my own distresses were now added, fear and anxiety for Camelford. I



was soon however, released by the arrival of a Bristol shopkeeper, who greeted this formal piece of family pride—and who from the airs she had given herself, might have pass'd for a duchess—by the appellation of 'Mrs. O'Leary;' at the same time informing her, that '*the family* were gone up to town—that the steward was at Bristol the day before, and desired him to meet her at the coach with a strict charge from *her lady*, to keep good fires in her absence.'

This discovery, so *mal-a-propos*, had an electric effect upon Mrs. Housekeeper: she hurried out of the room, followed by her friend, and left us to the enjoyment of a much-desired *tete-a-tete*; for though we had no comfort to communicate, we had much to talk of, regarding the peculiarities of our own situation, and very much to wonder at and regret, respecting Camelford, though we had some faint hopes, that he would have prudence enough to avoid Bristol.

The retrospect of the past was painful, and there was no prospect in future, but poverty and wretchedness! Almost heart-broken, 'even to play the woman with my eyes,' I found a cheering comforter in my Ann; she flattered, cherished, and prophesied good fortune—nay, if a situation could be found, would endeavour to do something herself towards a maintenance, on the stage, where assiduity should supply the place of talent. Oh, happy state! Avaunt, ye scoffers! This blessed bond of union between the sexes brings with it a solace for sorrow, exalts the mind and leaves no sting behind; whilst the fair hand of Affection wipes away the tear of Sensibility, it even transforms adversity into transport, by a heavenly mingle of congenial souls.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## "THE DOUBLE DISGUISE."

MURPHY.

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"This man's brow, like titled leaf,  
Foretels the nature of a tragic volume."

SHAKESPEARE.  


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It was now seven o'clock, the evening was dark, we were at an expensive inn, and our stay must not exceed the morning. But whither go? No matter—here we must not, could not stay. I went into the coach office to engage a place—to go I knew not whither—at that instant the Bridgewater coach arrived. It is very odd—I am no predestinarian, yet I firmly believe, a wise and all-seeing hand frequently guides the ways of silly mortals for their good when they least expect it; for I no sooner set eyes on the Bridgewater coachman, than I determined to question him; and well it was I did so, or heaven only knows what would have become of us. I inquired if there were players at Bridgewater? And to my great joy, the coachman replied in the affirmative, adding, 'the name of the manager is Williams.' I immediately recollected that Mr. and Mrs. Nunns, formerly with me at Worcester, left us to join this said Williams. Without hesitation I took two places in the morning

coach, and ran to communicate the tidings to my wife.

‘Did not I tell you,’ said she with her usual sprightliness, ‘that Providence would point out something for us? Come, now this terrible load is taken from your mind, let us talk of poor Camelford; though I hope for his own sake he is far from Bristol, there can be no harm or risk in inquiring for him, as he directed, under the assumed title of *Marquis*.’

‘Ah my love! What may not such a question lead to? Perhaps our disgrace and his ruin.’ But Ann’s curiosity prevailed over every other consideration: I rang the bell and in a faltering voice inquired if the Marquis was within? To my astonishment, he replied ‘oh yes sir, he has been out of town a few days, but returned just before dinner.’ The waiter was dismissed for a card and writing materials. I looked at my wife, she returned the scrutiny with interest, but ere we had time for oral communication the writing apparatus was brought. ‘Will the marquis admit a friend?’ was all I thought proper to say, and gave it into the hands of the waiter, who instantly returned with ‘the Marquis’s best respects and should esteem himself honoured by the gentleman’s company.’ Certain of a welcome, I took my wife under my arm and we were ushered into an elegant parlour. Camelford flew to receive us; his appearance was in all points the same as on our first introduction at Carlisle. Two middle aged, well dressed gentlemen sat on his right hand, and on his left I discovered, in the features of an elegant girl, the gipsy Fanny of Furness Abbey!

Surely such a combination of ideas never struck one man as I now experienced; memory brought forward in a moment my several interviews with this extraordinary man, but the two last were heightened by contrast; the battle of beggars last night at Worces-

ter, and now the elegant Marquis, surrounded by luxury at the Bush inn at Bristol.

As I observed before, Camelford had the address of a courtier—there was a fascination about him I never remember to have seen equalled by any other person. As soon as we entered the room, he gracefully bowed to Mrs. Romney, and then taking her hand, placed her by the side of Fanny, saying, ‘Madam, I introduce you to Mrs. Camelford, one who like yourself, deserves a better fate than the stars seem to have allotted, when they united your destinies with that of two unfortunates. Romney give me your hand—the best affections of my heart you have long had. When first I saw you at Carlisle, nine years ago, I set you down for one, whose unsuspecting temper would lay you open to the designs of the fraudulent. My knowledge of human nature enabled me, stimulated by the most urgent necessity, to take advantage of your credulity, which, though done without any ultimate view of injury, gave me pain inexpressible. The motives which governed me, you shall ere long, be in possession of; the first and only time I had the pleasure of seeing Mrs. R—— was at the Bush in Carlisle, where I received a benefit, that will live in my remembrance; and now we are at the Bush in Bristol, where I am not backward in acknowledging it. Give me leave to introduce you to my tried friends, Thompson and Lillo; men who, like myself, change shapes as often as Proteus, but whose hearts are immutably stamped with the characters of honest men.’

I implicitly believed the whole of this speech, though it certainly required a degree of faith almost super-human; and cordially taking his friends by the hand, made my acknowledgments for my deliverance at Worcester, ‘for which, gentlemen, I suspect I am indebted to your joint endeavours.’ ‘You are,’ replied Camelford, ‘I have always since you became a

public man, obtained a knowledge of your residence through the medium of the papers, not only from the regard I bear you, but from the sacred deposit you have in your possession—a deposit placed there, from a high opinion of your integrity, and a confidence, that in my keeping there was a doubt of its safety, from the many unavoidable changes both of situation and apparel, our itinerancy exposed us to. Circumstances have in some respects bettered my condition, and I determined to surprise you by a visit at Worcester, little foreseeing the desperate state of your affairs, which the first inquiry fully informed me of; and as I found flight or imprisonment your only alternative, we happily succeeded in procuring you the former, though I hope not at the dreadful price of murder.

‘I fancy the officer of justice has been prematurely sent in search of us; one of the bailiffs I am certain is uninjured, the other I conceive to have merely been stunned by the fall, with the addition of a few flesh wounds.’

An excellent supper interrupted the discourse, where the kind attention of Camelford and his Fanny, with the sensible, well bred remarks of Thompson and Lillo, made me for awhile forget our forlorn and destitute condition. On a sudden, Camelford became thoughtful, leaned his head upon his hand in meditative silence, then heaving a deep sigh, rose up and requested me to follow him; when we got into a retired apartment, he shut the door and thus addressed me.

‘Romney, you have long no doubt, wished to know who, and what the mysterious character is, who for years has haunted you, rather I trust as your good than evil genius; the period is now arrived; I have from time to time at stated intervals, noted down the most material occurrences of my life. Read it,’ said he, putting a manuscript into my hand,

‘and you will find, that however appearances have told against me, I have not been intentionally criminal. Deep the anguish that has for years corroded my heart, but it is not remorse of conscience, it is not a self-condemning monitor that draws from me the heavy sigh, or throws a gloom on my once cheerful countenance—No! It is not these, it is the heart-rending reflection that the parent who bore me, the being to whom I owe my existence, lost *hers* by this arm—start not my friend, you will find that though my sword pierced the bosom that fostered me, it was unintentional, it was—I will not say chance—it was the hand of providence that chose to make me the miserable instrument of punishment.—Alas my mother! Thy death is amply revenged! For fifteen years, one hour’s real comfort has never cheered the breast of the unfortunate Camelford—a wretched wanderer—a persecuted outcast—involving in his fate the best of women and of friends.’

Camelford to hide his emotion, walked to the other end of the room, and putting the manuscript into my pocket, I was preparing to speak a word of consolation, when the waiter entered and informed the Marquis that Mr. Alderman ———, and an ill-looking man had inquired for his lordship, and were then in the parlour.

Camelford shewed no surprise, but when the servant retired, confessed a suspicion that his visitors were come on no friendly errand. On seeing my agitation, he smiled, and with much coolness asked me, ‘if the gipsies of the North were to be outwitted by an *old woman*? Follow me,’ said he; then leading me up to his dressing-room, he opened a large chest, in which were a variety of habits of different kinds, but all tending to disguise the real person of the owner, who in a moment transformed himself into a spruce, sober-looking citizen, in a brown bob-wig, a cock’d hat flapped before, boots, great coat, and whip,

which gave him the appearance of a traveller just arrived. He next disguised me in a drab frock, a scratch wig, blue boot stockings, and a knowing kind of round hat ; then placing a brace of pistols in my pockets, he bade me follow him but not to speak a word.

Down stairs we went, and by the tradesman-like air he assumed, would have deceived even his most intimate acquaintance ; and convinced me that had Camelford turned his thoughts to the stage, he would have cut a very considerable figure.

He threw open the parlour door, exclaiming, ' Where is his lordship ? ' Then turning to me said, ' Officer, guard that door—let no one stir out of the room at your peril ! ' The little justice was seated, with the Worcester thief-taker by his side ; Thompson, Lillo, and Fanny, were at the table, taking their wine with much composure, whilst *my* share of the female property looked round upon the different groups with amazement and terror, neither discovering Camelford nor me.

Having by this time acquired an intimation of the part I was expected to perform, I began to exert my talents of imitation, by shutting the door with some force, rolling in my gait in the true St. Giles' style, and guarding the entrance, by shewing the brass ends of the pistols out of each pocket.

Our sudden appearance, boisterous manner, and the sight of fire-arms, had a visible effect on the little alderman's nervous system, and in tremulous accents, he inquired, what's the matter ?

' The matter sir ! ' said Camelford, going up to the justice, ' my money must be paid ; I'll not travel post all the way from London for nothing. Where is the Marquis ? ' The waiters told me I should find him here ; perhaps sir, you are of his suite—his steward, mayhap, and this good-looking person his bailiff'—then turning round, he continued, ' Odso ! I beg

pardon of this good company; I now see through the whole business—my lord is out of town, and you are playing ‘High Life below Stairs,’ in his absence.’

‘The justice during this speech, made large demands upon his snuff-box, and at its conclusion said, ‘Really friend, you do me unmerited honour. I cannot answer for the rest of this agreeable party; but in vindication of myself, I must say, your judgment is erroneous, nor do I think it adds much to the credit of your penetration, to mistake an alderman of Bristol for the steward of a culprit, pursued by the officers of justice for murder. I am here in my judicial capacity, and this man has journey’d from Worcester, for the purpose of taking him into custody.’

‘Give me your hand sir,’ said Camelford, ‘I am come on the same errand; my name is Lawrence Linchpin, of Long-acre, I dare say you have heard of me; I am coachmaker to his royal highness the Prince of Wales, and shall esteem myself proud of an order from you, sir. The Marquis of Valois has dealt with me for many years; ’twas he who first introduced the landau into this country; I must say, his lordship, before time, paid very honourably—many a cool hundred have I touched of his money; and if he had staid in London or its neighbourhood, I should have been under no anxiety—but you know Mr. Alderman, when people take to travelling, and flying about from place to place, it’s hard work to catch ’em, particularly these foreigners.’

‘Vy, lookee, sir,’ said the runner, ‘tho’ I be com’d all the way from Vo’ster about this here bit of bisens, I don’t come for to go, to pass an affront upon a gemmen—I knows better, and I wish to digest a circumstance: Mr. Justice Fielding used to say, ‘At your apparel nab the right cul, or quod’s your snoozing ken.’ So, seeing as how we’re got upon the wrong lay, Mr. Alderman, it’s best to sherry. The turn-



pike-man has *queer'd* us ; but b—t his eyes, if I'm not up to his *gossip* !'

Camelford turning towards the supper-table, said, 'Ladies and gentlemen, I hope no offence ; but I should be obligated if you would tell me where I could find the Marquis, who stands indebted to me two hundred and fifty pounds for the very carriage which brought him down here ; and as I have been at a heavy expense in bringing this man all the way from London, I wo'nt leave the house till I am paid.'

During this speech, the alderman and his companion whispered. When Camelford concluded, the former said, 'I am afraid we have been led into an error. This person is in pursuit of three men, who committed a murder last night in the city of Worcester, and left that place disguised as sailors. The man at the turnpike says, a post-chaise passed him, containing three men dressed as above. We have been at all the principal inns, but can trace no carriage from Malmsbury, that at all answers our description, except one to this house, which, the waiter says, brought the Marquis and two more gentlemen. So, conceiving it possible that the title might be an imposition, we have acted accordingly ; for which I am now sorry, as we have such positive assurance of our error, and wish you a good evening.' Thus ended this perilous adventure.

Having resumed our natural appearance, the conversation took a pleasing turn, enlivened by Camelford's vivacity, who so far from entertaining fear from the alderman's visit, rejoiced he said, in the opportunity of displaying his talents before me, and proving that there were good actors *off* the stage. 'And now Romney, I would tell you,' he continued, 'by what means our circumstances are bettered, since last I saw you ; but it will by anticipation, injure the interest I know you will take in perusing the manu-

script. My dear Mrs. R——, your husband has in his possession a valuable token of my regard, which I know, he will faithfully preserve. Here is a small pocket-book—will you honour me, by accepting it? It contains my address, which I request may be made use of, whenever your unsettled fortune makes an application needful. There is one thing,' continued Camelford, 'I very much wish to know—have you the most remote idea who the lady was, from whom I had the ring?' I paused, endeavouring if possible, to charge my memory with the particulars; but, though I heard the parson mention the name inscribed on the card, it had entirely escaped my recollection.

This seemed visibly to affect Camelford, and a pause ensued—'But though the name of the lady lives not in my remembrance, from an association of ideas, and a coincidence of circumstances, the residence of that lady does.'

'Where—where is it?' he eagerly inquired.

'At Llandaff, South Wales.'

'Thank God! a gleam of distant hope revives my drooping heart. To Llandaff will we steer our course. Romney, I will relieve you from your charge; the ring must go along—'twill be necessary towards my introduction.'

Alas! my friend, it is impossible you can have it now; the ring is locked up in my trunk, which on account of its weight, and the heavy expense attending the conveyance from Worcester, I have sent by the waggon some hours ago, for Bridgewater, whither I mean to go in the morning.

Camelford shook his head, and pondered awhile—'Well, well,' said he, at last, 'I know it is safe in your care, and perhaps, I may gain the necessary information without it—only preserve it as you would your life; for it was—oh, God!—that ring was—my mother's!! She wore it at her death! Oh, how

that word freezes the current of my blood ! It was given her by my father, as a pledge of love ; it bore his name, together with that of a beloved sister, who was carried off by a consumption in her twentieth year. These arms received the last breath and benediction of a revered father ; and this arm—with a look of horror—‘ but I will not anticipate—you have in your possession a tale of woe—read, and participate in all my sorrow ; I know you will pity, not only me, but these dear friends, and that still dearer woman, who have shared my adverse fortune, and in sharing, suffered more than pusillanimous natures could have supported. But our country, America, is the land of heroes. Unused to the enervating luxury and effeminacy enjoyed by Europeans, we are by education and habit, rendered robust and muscular ; the faculties of the soul participate in this strength ; the energies are conveyed from the corporeal to the mental powers, and thus we become strong in mind, as the functions of our bodies dilate.’

At breakfast next morning, I inquired if the Marquis was stirring ? and learnt to my great surprise, that his party left Bristol, in two chaises, at five o’clock, on a tour to the North ! ‘ Did he leave neither letter nor message ? ’ ‘ No, sir.’

Camelford gone—and left me to all the horrors of poverty ! I had not conceived him capable of deserting me in my distress ; his presence seemed that of a protecting genius, of which his absence entirely deprived me. I felt myself a poor, deserted being, whom nobody knew—for whom nobody cared ; in short, I reasoned as though I had a *demand* upon him, in the neglect of which I found myself injured.

When we entered the coach for Bridgewater, my mind, my every sensation, were completely misanthropic ; I looked around me with disgust, and could have said with Hamlet, ‘ How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable, seem all the uses of this world ! ’—The

passengers, of which there were four, excited not the smallest degree of attention; despair had paralyzed my tongue, and thrown all my faculties into a state of torpor. Not so my wife—Heaven had blessed her with a share of animal spirits, that set vapours at defiance; she joined conversation with the gaiety of a mind at ease, nor reflected, that one solitary guinea composed the whole of our worldly possessions, without any certain knowledge where another was to be acquired.

When arrived at our destination, my first inquiry was after the theatre; upon which the waiter gave me a play-bill, and, as I suspected, the names of Mr. and Mrs. Nunns were conspicuous. After dinner I waited upon them, and was received with great cordiality and apparent friendship; but when I described my situation and the state of my finances, with the absolute necessity of procuring immediate employment, an obvious alteration took place—‘Very sorry, indeed—why did I not write to him to know how the land lay, before I hazarded so long a journey—afraid the company was too full to admit of an addition, but would speak to the manager.’ This he did, and an interview took place, which left me in total despair.’ In short, there was no engagement to be had; and indeed, had I considered the character and situation of the ambassador I employed to negotiate, I might easily have calculated the result.

Nunns was a man of the world; a good low comedian, and sung comic songs. As he knew my talents were in the same line, he was the last man in the world to recommend a rival.

Disappointed in my hopes of an engagement at Bridgewater, I knew not what course to steer, and was brooding over my miseries, when Mrs. Nunns aroused my attention by the pleasing information, that there was a small company at Taunton-Dean,

about twelve miles farther, who according to the best information, were doing extremely well.

To Taunton I repaired, leaving Ann with Mrs. Nunns, at her request, till I knew the result of this expedition.

The appearance of this little town is highly in its favour; it is clean and cheerful, inhabited by a number of genteel families, who were destined to shew us a great deal of attention and civility.

As the coach passed along, hopes of immediate employment gave me a pleasurable sensation; I beheld every object with a partial eye, and saw an overflowing benefit in each smiling physiognomy. For a wonder, my flattering conjectures were even exceeded by the reality.

The coach stopped at the castle; and after a beef-steak dinner, I ordered a bottle of wine, and sent my compliments to Mr. Davis the manager, requesting the honour of his company. Knowing how much depends on a first appearance, I had put on clean linen, and with my hair handsomely dressed, cut no despicable figure; though, as I waited the return of my messenger, I felt a slight degree of alarm, lest the haughty demeanour and grand appearance of this successful 'king of shreds and patches' might overawe me. Three or four glasses of wine however, gave me courage; and great as I had pictured this man, who was in reality to decide my fate, I determined to shew as little anxiety as possible, and when the waiter announced Mr. Davis, threw myself into a kind of pick-tooth attitude, and pretended to be reading the paper. I arose with a bow, to receive the great man, and a request that he would be seated, and take a glass of wine. But, oh, heavens! 'what a falling-off was here,' from the man I had pictured 'in my mind's eye!' With diffidence, and an awkward bow, he advanced, and his *costume* put

me in mind of—what?—a bum-bailiff! not as these respectable gentlemen appear in the present day, but such as they were about thirty years ago.

He had a cheerful, pleasing countenance, with a person of the middle size, and if washed, combed, and decently habited, would have passed through the world with little or no observation; but there was a natural indolence perceptible in every motion that gave a notoriety to his appearance, not exactly prepossessing.

A thread-bare, greasy, drab great coat, covered a still more worn-out black one; a faded scarlet waistcoat, bound with black tape, seemingly of some antiquity; velvet small-clothes, that were originally confined at the knees with buckles, but for lack of this article, the straps were ingeniously pinned together; silk stockings that had once been black, but from long attachment to their master, were grown brown in the service, especially about the heel, which rather bagged and puckered over the shoe, shewing a repugnance to conceal a visible fracture, though often *coaxed* into compliance. His hair was uncombed, and to the powder and pomatum of the last dressing adhered certain particles of down, collected from his pillow, which plainly indicated contempt for that useful appendage called a night-cap. His brows still retained some vestiges of burnt cork, as did his cheeks of rose pink, which had served to beautify him for the last night's play. When I add to this description unwashed hands, you will have a faithful picture of manager Davis, as he appeared to my wonder-struck eyes at our first meeting.

After the news of the day had been discussed, I made known my *wishes*, but carefully kept my *wants* in the back ground. The manager listened to me with attention, and I soon found that his company was more celebrated for numbers than ability; in short, he agreed that Mrs. R—— and I should have

an opening and an engagement, provided we could agree upon salary, which should be the same as the rest of the company—for they were all upon an equality—that is, nine shillings per week. Trifling as this sum may appear, I cheerfully agreed to it; a certainty of eighteen shillings per week, to one who had no other visible means of existence, was not to be thrown away with contempt.

Having finished our wine, I found Davis inclined to render me every service in his power; we went in search of a lodging, and took a single room, clean and comfortable, at four shillings a week. The only difficulty now was, to procure money to bring my wife, and this I thought I could obviate, by desiring her to borrow half-a-guinea of Mrs. Nunns. Having despatched my letter, with a light heart, I perambulated this pretty town, and in the evening met the actors at a small public house. They consisted of Messrs. Money Penny, Dowton, Warren, Wooley, Baynes, Jonathan Davis, and Pindar; Mrs. and Miss Bridges, Miss Francis, Miss Smith, and another young woman, whose name I cannot call to mind. Besides these, there was a Mrs. Hall, who was wife to the travelling musician, and received cheques at the door.

The male part of the company, with the exception of Jonathan Davis and the manager, were all young adventurers. How various have been their fates! Money Penny, whose real name was Bignal, some years afterwards, went to America, where he died; Dowton now holds a respectable situation in Drury-lane theatre; Warren is manager of the theatre in Philadelphia; Baynes keeps a tavern in London; J. Davis and Wooley are no more; and the last time I heard of Pindar, he attempted the part of *Richard*, at the Haymarket, in which he so enraptured the audience, that they encored his dying speech.

I pressed my pillow that night, in a comparative state of felicity. No one can properly appreciate the comforts of life, but those who have been deprived of them. I at this moment, wanted nothing to render mine complete, except my little woman—and she would come by the morning's coach.

Our establishment was soon settled, and Ann commenced her studies with good humour and alacrity. On inquiring if Mrs. Nunns had lent the half-guinea cheerfully? she said, 'Mrs. Nunns has been very civil and hospitable; but fortunately, I managed matters without that humiliation. 'Tis mortification enough to be poor, without exposing our circumstances to people who feel no kind of interest in, nor concern about them. You look surprised; but you will be more so, when I inform you how cleverly I conducted the business, without communicating to any one the real state of our affairs.'

'Indeed! I never before Ann, knew the full extent of your abilities; this is your first appearance in the character of financier—but come, open your budget, and inform me how the ways and means were supplied.'

'Feeling myself not quite in spirits after your departure,' said she, nor much inclined for conversation, I retired to my own apartment, and merely for want of other employment, mechanically began to look over the small leather trunk, which you know, contains the night-clothes, and other little articles necessary on a journey, and where I had placed Camelford's present. Curiosity prompted me to examine his address, and likewise the book, which was handsome, and of curious construction; but judge of my surprise, on opening a private pocket, to find a twenty-pound note, accompanied with these words:



‘When Romney’s beloved companion and friend opens this book, she will find what may keep the wolf from the door awhile; ’tis all circumstances will permit me to part with at present; accept it, with the best wishes of  
CAMELFORD.’

‘Bristol, April, 1785.’

‘Now Romney,’ continued Ann, ‘let this caution you against drawing hasty conclusions in future. With what ungrateful suspicions and unfriendly conjectures, did you load our benefactor, whose truly delicate manner of conferring an obligation raises him far above the level of mankind in general; and my curiosity to peruse the manuscript cannot much longer be kept within bounds. After my awful *debut* to-morrow night, is over, till which I can think of nothing else, we will be denied to all intruders, and gratify a very natural wish, to know who, and what, our friend Camelford really is.’

‘The School for Scandal’ was rehearsed with great difficulty, owing to a difference in the copies. My part, of *Sir Peter*, was from Mr. Sheridan’s manuscript; the others were spurious, unlike the original in every scene, and so altered and mutilated, that the author could scarcely have recognized his own composition. To complete my mortification, Miss Francis, the *Lady Teazle*, who was coarse as a dairy-maid, and clumsy as a cart-mare, found herself highly offended, because I objected to a tweak by the nose, and a pull by the ear, which she said, ‘she always introduced in the fondling scene with *Sir Peter*.’ The farce was ‘The Poor Soldier,’ in which I played *Darby*, and Mrs. R——, *Norah*, with great effect, considering it as a first appearance.

The whole of the night’s performance, and receipts fully answered the manager’s expectations. He was complimented by the first people in town, on the

acquisition he had made; and with light hearts, and sanguine hopes we retired to a repose, rendered sweet and refreshing, by the joy, public approbation never fails to bestow.

In the morning, Camelford's manuscript was produced; and Ann who was excellently qualified for the undertaking, read it aloud; but as it consisted chiefly of notes and memorandums drawn up in the form of a journal, I have endeavoured to modify it, and now commence historian, on the part of Charles Camelford.

## THE GIPSEYS OF THE NORTH.

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‘It’s a lie!’ exclaimed the colonel, jumping over the table, and seizing the venerable clergyman by the throat, ‘it’s a lie, and I’ll make you eat your words.’

The company interféred—silence was obtained, and the reverend pastor of a small congregation, a few miles from Philadelphia, thus continued : ‘ You see, gentlemen, how bad the cause—how weak the argument that requires force to support it. My years, my religion, my disposition, are inimical to war of every kind. I speak the truth ; in doing which, if you protect me from insult, I will proceed.’—‘ Go on, go on,’ was echoed from every quarter ; ‘ go on, and we will protect you.’—‘ I repeat it,’ he continued, ‘ Thou art the man ! Full fifteen years have fled, since I have passed one pleasant hour. My wife, the darling of my heart, in whose affection I found a solace, amidst the cares of the world and the labours of my profession—my wife, I say’—whilst tears stole down his furrowed cheek—‘ was basely seduced, and her angelic mind poisoned by arts as numerous as base. ’Ere that destroyer, that fiend in human shape, set foot within my humble threshold, discontent never entered my dwelling—bliss forsook not my fire-side. This lordly owner of a princely domain, not contented with every gift that fortune

could bestow, cast an envious eye on my poor humble cottage, and under the fascinating veil of smiling friendship, plunged a dagger in that heart, that beat but to serve him.'

The feelings of this aged orator, at the conclusion of his speech, overcame him; he sunk back in his chair, and whilst the rest of the company ran to his assistance, the honourable culprit made his escape. 'Is he gone?' inquired the unhappy old man, as he drew his hand from his brow, 'God forgive him!—he carries no curse from me—the misery of an upbraiding conscience needs no addition.'

This interview had such an awful effect upon the Rev. Charles Camelford, that ere the dawn of morning, he was in a high fever, attended with delirium, which the physicians pronounced, from his age and debility, would in all probability prove fatal. His son, his only comfort, was immediately sent for, who arrived at the inn where this unfortunate rencontre had taken place, to behold a reverend, and honoured parent raving with the frenzy of a maniac. Col. —, and his poor deluded Lucy, were the names his mind seemed to dwell upon; then would he call upon his son, his Charles, to revenge his injuries—to exterminate the destroyer of his honour—to restore his peace, by delivering a wife and a mother, from the fell fangs of that ruthless monster, whose machinations had brought misery upon her here, and never-ending woe hereafter.

Charles, who had never heard any language from his father before, that was not fraught with meekness and humility, and who was totally ignorant of his mother's dishonour, concluded his present wanderings merely the effect of disease. He honoured, he almost worshipped his parent; the agony of such a mind may therefore be conceived, when he found him raving on the bed of sickness—perhaps of death.

Two days restored this victim of treachery to a

spected by his superiors, beloved by his equals, and looked up to by the soldiers, with an enthusiasm bordering on adoration.

About this time he had the good fortune, at the head of a small skirmishing party, to render such essential service to his country, that he not only received public thanks, but was promoted to the rank of captain.

One day whilst on a foraging party, they passed a beautiful villa on the banks of the river, and Col.—— was named as the owner. This intelligence acted on the frame of Camelford with the force of electricity; that name had never met his ear since the death of his father, and it gave him a shock he was ill prepared to receive. On further inquiry, he found the colonel, who was not then in actual service, lived at this fascinating spot, in a style of the utmost luxury, with a lady who, though she bore his name, was said to have no lawful claim to it.

His mind, the seat of honour, brooded over this intelligence. To suffer a mother thus to live, without an effort to reclaim her, was revolting to every feeling of his soul; but how to act he knew not. Two of his most intimate friends were called to the consultation, who entered so warmly into his interest and views, that they swore their lives, if necessary, should be sacrificed to serve him; at the same time recommending force as the only expedient that would be effective. Warm and ardent, with the imprudence of youth, he entered without reflection upon this plan.

At the time appointed, the three friends, with six assistant soldiers, sallied forth, and at the dead hour of night made a forcible entry, through a back window, into the colonel's house. The soldiers without much trouble, secured the servants, who buried in sleep, made little resistance; whilst Camelford and his friends, with a light, explored the way to the co-

every benefit such extensive knowledge could bestow from a parent, who thought every hour mispent, that was not dedicated either to his darling son's improvement, or to the service of his fellow creatures. Devoted to a country life, those hours not set apart for mental improvement, were by Charles dedicated to manly exercises, and included those not only of mere activity, but of labour and fatigue. Thus he was early initiated into what are generally termed field sports, but which in America, are attended with bodily exertions, unknown in this country. In wrestling, cudgel-playing, cricket, and tennis, he was such an adept, that none of the neighbouring youths could at all contend with him; but his superiority was attended with such sweetness of manners, that though acknowledged, it was without acrimony. The French and Latin languages were as familiar to him as English, to which he added a slight knowledge of Italian. On the violin, he was far from being a contemptible performer, though nearly self-taught. His voice was tuned to harmony, even in speaking; but when he sung, it was indeed, 'A concord of sweet sounds.'

Such was Charles Camelford, when he entered the army. An estate of three hundred pounds per annum, would devolve upon him at the expiration of his minority, till which period it was held in trust for the support of an aged relative. Behold him now fighting the battles of his country, with a courage and intrepidity that set fear at defiance; in every service of peculiar danger, Camelford was the first to offer himself. Were dispatches to be conveyed through the fire of the enemy, who so fearless as Camelford? Undaunted by terror—undismayed by fatigue—unappalled in the hour of danger—the most pusillanimous, whilst witnessing such heroic exploits, imbibed a portion of his warlike spirit.

Thus passed two years of Camelford's life—re-

The six assistant soldiers, in this scene of death, had been disguised with crapes, to save them from detection, and consequent punishment; and as *they only* were seen by the servants, no conjecture could lead to *suspicion*, except the uniform, which was fully described; upon further search, there was likewise found a white pocket handkerchief, marked with the name of *William Thompson*. Gen. Washington, informed of this atrocious act, and the suspicion attached to his regiment, offered a reward of two hundred pounds, on conviction of the murderers; to which were added two hundred pounds more, from the heir of the deceased.

The handkerchief being sent to the commanding officer, Thompson was taken up, and on the point of being fully committed, when Camelford rushed into the court, and proclaimed his comrade's innocence.

'Who, then, is guilty?' said the magistrate.

'If such you call it,' answered Camelford, 'I am the man! Wrought up to desperation by a mother's shame, and a father's murder, *I alone* committed this act of retribution, and glory in having purged the world of a monster! With respect to the female, she rushed between our swords, and received the death intended for another; and though my peace of mind is fled for ever, as far as regards her, I am *intentionally* innocent.'

Camelford and Thompson were both found guilty—one as the principal, the other for aiding and abetting.

There being no prison at hand, they were confined in a room sometimes occupied for that purpose, situated in the back and uninhabited part of a gentleman's house—the building guarded by a file of soldiers, and three sentinels, with bayonets fixed, placed outside the door.

Camelford's reflections may be imagined; but any attempt to describe them, must fall infinitely short of

the reality. The hand that would not willingly have destroyed an insect, had wrought a double murder.

‘ Murder ! most foul, as in the best it is,

‘ But this—most foul, strange, and unnatural.’

A mother’s murder !—the parent who bore, nurtured, and in his infancy had been most tender !—yet this parent he had, with paracidal hand, cut off, ‘ ere half her days were numbered—no reckoning made—but sent to her account with all her imperfections on her head.’

To add greater poignancy to feelings, already too acute, his friend, his generous companion, would be another sacrifice. In such a complication of calamity, this sat heavy on his mind, and could it have been spared, he fancied all other evils might be borne.

The friends of each were unwearied in their applications. Though he was universally beloved, and uniformly pitied, the relations of the deceased were too powerful, not to combat every effort that was made to save him.

The soldier, who attended with their food, was a man whose life Camelford had saved, by cutting down an Englishman whose piece was levelled at his head ; but he never entered the apartment without the attendance of the three sentinels, who suffered not a word of communication ; yet the tear of gratitude and sorrow was visible in his eye.

During the second night of their confinement, the friends distinguished a low sound behind the wainscot in the back part of the room, which they conceived to be rats ; but when the morning broke in upon them, something white was seen to move upon the partition, which, gradually increasing in size, at length fell upon the floor. Camelford, in surprise, picked up a small piece of paper, on which was written,



‘ Can you be faithful, Camelford ? I love, pity, and can relieve you. Is your heart disengaged ? If so, I will trust to your honour for the rest. If your answer is favourable to my wish, cross your arms upon your breast ; if the contrary—which Heaven avert—place your left hand upon your head ; for I see you, and, alas ! have seen you too often.’

Camelford, on the impulse of the moment, looked towards the wainscot, and crossed his arms upon his breast, whilst a smile of sweet accord irradiated his countenance.

This done, he communicated the contents of the note to Thompson, and they congratulated each other upon the possibility of escaping the fate that, before, seemed inevitable. In less than an hour, a second piece of paper was squeezed through the crevice ; and ran thus :—

‘ By your actions I am led to conclude your heart is free ; I believe, and will confide. Mark—the soldier who attends upon you, may be trusted. You saved his life ; he will cancel the obligation by saving yours. The next time he brings you food, cut not the loaf in presence of the guard ; for concealed within is a file, by means of which you may easily disengage yourselves from the bonds with which you are disgracefully fettered ; but be cautious ; the least noise breeds suspicion, and the sentinels are watchful. Disencumbered of your irons, wait till the great clock strikes three ; your friend the soldier will then remove a small division of the pannel, in loosening which, he spent the greatest part of last night. Your escape is then secure ; he will conduct you into the garden, where I shall wait your coming. But mind, your deliverer must accompany us, or his life is forfeited. Farewell. Remember three !’

The contents of this letter gave joy unspeakable to the two friends, and a variety of conjectures were formed concerning the writer—Who could she be ? Their prison formed part of a deserted fabric adjoining to a gentleman’s house ; but who that gentleman was, or of whom his family consisted, they were entirely ignorant. No matter ; gratitude would cement the attachment, even though personal charms were wanting—not that Camelford was such a stoic, as to be indifferent on that point ; but hitherto his

heart had been insensible to the attacks of beauty, and, perhaps, the generous attachment of this heroic female would effect, what mere loveliness had in vain attempted.

At the usual hour, the soldier, closely followed by the sentinels, brought them their allowance, and as was customary, waited till the bread was cut, to take away the knife. Camelford complained, that want of air and exercise destroyed all relish for food; but requested to know if he should cut a little for Thompson? who, pretending to be ill, had thrown himself upon the bench, and refused to eat. 'Well, well,' said the soldier, 'when you are hungry, my fine fellows, you must contrive to divide your loaf as well as you can, by breaking it; for I shall not leave a knife in the hands of desperate men. So farewell, and better stomachs to you, at our next meeting.'

The guard had scarcely fastened the door, ere the file was drawn forth; but how to use it without noise? The monotonous grating of this instrument would assuredly be heard, and the most distant suspicion lead to inquiry. At length it was agreed, that one should work, whilst the other read aloud in the bible, the only book which had been granted to their earnest petition.

A short time sufficed to complete their emancipation, though the fetters were still confined by strings, for fear of a surprise, and, as it happened, the caution was necessary; for, about eight o'clock, a stranger appeared to inform them, the court would sit in the morning, when sentence would be passed, and earnestly admonished them to prepare for so awful an event.

More than ever anxious for the appointed period, the intermediate hours passed heavily. Doubts of success, as the time became more critical, gave a damp to expectation, and when the heavy bell tolled half past two, their feelings were wrought up almost

to a state of frenzy; not that either of them feared death, had it found them at the post of honour—but the parade of a public execution was more than philosophy could reconcile to minds, young and sanguine as theirs.

An awful, a death-like stillness reigned with more than usual solemnity around them. Not a glimmering of light was visible; they were seated opposite the wainscot, with eyes intently fixed upon it, even till they ached with gazing. The clock at length struck the wished for hour—three solemn strokes upon the bell gave the appointed signal, and the wainscot was heard to move, though still nothing was visible.

To lay aside their fetters, was the first consideration, which Camelford effected in perfect silence; but Thompson, trembling with trepidation, loosed his hold, and they fell to the ground with a loud noise. The sentinel was roused, and asked in a voice of anger, 'What is the matter?' Thompson with much presence of mind, apologized for disturbing him, and added in a melancholy tone, that 'as he was rising from his devotions, his foot slipped and he fell down.' 'Well, well,' replied the guard in the most unfeeling manner, 'you won't disturb us often in the same way; for your time here is short, my masters.'

In a few minutes every thing was again quiet, except the snoring of the sentinel, which was heard with pleasure, as a token that suspicion slept. Our friends disencumbered of their shoes, crept softly towards the pannel, when Camelford felt something pointed towards his breast, and naturally putting his hand to the place, found it was the sheath of a sword, which, as he seized it, gently pulled him forward. Having hold of Thompson by the other hand, they soon found the aperture, and without much difficulty crept through. Not a word escaped their lips; they were fearful even of breathing in this dangerous atmosphere, and followed their guide through several

apartments, till, on a sudden, he made a halt—‘Be on your guard,’ said he, ‘not against human force; for none here will assail you. This stair-case has not been used for years; ’tis broken in many places, and dangerous to descend. Follow with caution, and wherever the footing is unsafe, I will give you notice.’

Thus forewarned, without accident they reached the bottom, and going through a low passage which terminated in a court, once more breathed the air of liberty. The friendly soldier, for such, indeed, he was, then led them to a garden gate. ‘At the bottom of that walk,’ said he, ‘you will find a present worthy of a prince—Captain, farewell! I have done my duty, and whatever becomes of me, I can die with a clear conscience.’ He was then retiring, when Camelford, seizing his hand, said, ‘Soldier, join our fortunes; we will fly this place, and in some foreign land exert our talents for the general good’—‘Good or bad,’ replied he, ‘I am yours, nor will you find Lillo unworthy of your favour. I am no mercenary—no hireling. I left my father’s fruitful fields, to fight the battles of my country as a volunteer; many a glorious victory I have shared under your command, and though not your equal in ability—in courage and integrity, you will not, I trust, find me wanting.’

Camelford now questioned Lillo, respecting the female who had interested herself in their deliverance.

‘She is,’ said he, ‘the only daughter of the owner of this house, a man of large fortune and great respectability. She was in court when you so nobly came forward to save your friend, and determined to work your release; as a prelude to which, she desired me to meet her in the garden, and asked if I knew Capt. Camelford? I then told her what you had done for me, and what I was willing to do for you in

return; which, thank God! we have between us effected. She now waits for us in the garden, and is ready to go through the world with you.'

'Is she young, Lillo?'

'Apparently about twenty—with the form of an angel, and the mind of a heroine; her name is Fanny—Miss Fanny Johnson.'

'Johnson!' exclaimed Camelford's friend, 'I know her well, the sweetest girl this country e'er produced; her father is related to Governor J——, a man who bears the cause we have been fighting for no good will. But come, the lady will be full of apprehensions if we do not make our appearance; besides, the morning dawns, and renders a longer parley dangerous.'

Camelford leaving his companions, approached the lovely maid, whose majestic form and travelling dress forcibly reminded him of the Sylvan goddess. He approached, kneeled, took her hand, and pressed it to his lips; then, with a serious, bold sincerity, that carried conviction to the heart, exclaimed, 'For the unparalleled misfortunes I have experienced, the hand of Heaven has sent me the only reward that could be adequate to my sufferings. I cannot flatter—I scorn a falsehood. You asked me before, if 'my heart was disengaged?' I answered, Yes. Put the same question to me now, and I will, with honesty, say, 'No!' My heart and hand are from this moment yours. Lead me—dispose of me as you please—from henceforward I live but to obey you.'

'Oh, Camelford! I fear you will hereafter condemn me, for thus transgressing the bounds prescribed my sex, by usage, and the tyrant Custom; if, on the contrary, you can allow for circumstances and situation, the fond girl, who has in part contrived your freedom, will accompany you to any clime where that freedom may be secured.'

After suitable acknowledgments and protestations,

Thompson and Lillo were summoned, and Fanny directed their course towards a hill on the left, beyond which was a cottage tenanted by an old couple, and their son, who to her bounty were indebted for comforts their own circumscribed situation would have denied.

Long before their usual time of rising, our pedestrians loudly demanded admittance, which being granted, Fanny made known as much of their situation as convinced these primitive cottagers that secrecy was required, and despatch necessary. Accordingly, Robert, their son, was sent to the next town to purchase sailors' habits, three brace of pistols, and the same number of cutlasses. In the mean time, Fanny took possession of the old couple's bed, and the others throwing themselves on the couch of Robert, sought to recruit wearied nature by a few hours' rest, previous to the fatiguing and dangerous march they had in view.

Robert executed their commands with punctuality and diligence; and as they meant to set forward in the course of the evening, no time was lost in their equipment. On assembling together in the kitchen, Camelford inquired for the little scratch wig he had ordered to cover Fanny's luxuriant tresses; which Robert now pulled from his pocket. But judge of their consternation and terror, when they found the wig folded in a printed paper, exactly descriptive of their persons, with a reward of one hundred pounds for their apprehension.

Something of the kind was expected; but that it could have got into circulation so soon, whilst they themselves were scarcely out of ear-shot, exceeded all belief. The sun was sinking beneath the horizon, and every thing prepared for their departure, when Fanny gave into the hands of Camelford a small casket, containing some valuable jewels; then rewarding their entertainers, they set out, scarcely

able to discern their track. Lillo was constituted pilot; he was fully acquainted with the geography of the country, for at least fifty miles, in every direction, and raised their hopes, by insuring their safety.

Camelford's wish was, if possible, to get to Charlestown, and there take shipping for any of the French ports; but tediousness marked the way. Their progress was impeded by fears of detection; for they rarely ventured into the high road, but crept along the woods, listening for their pursuers, and not daring to beguile the time with conversation, lest it should lead to discovery.

Fanny, by the help of Camelford, proceeded for about six hours with spirit and alacrity; but then exhausted nature required rest. Lillo was interrogated, but strongly recommended their proceeding, even though they should be obliged to carry Fanny, as, in another hour, a place, commodious and safe, would be within their reach. Camelford, affectionately pressing her hand, poured forth his regret, and almost wished she had never united herself with a fate so wretched as his; but this truly heroic girl smiled at his fears, and in cheerful accents declared herself able to proceed.

The gray morn was peeping from the east, when they entered a large wood, which Lillo assured them, afforded every requisite for safety and comfort. After creeping through the underwood for about half a mile, they came to a beautiful glade, through which ran a delightful spring, nearly shaded by the forest trees. The turf was soft and refreshing, and after partaking of the viands Lillo's knapsack contained, they made as comfortable a bed as the place would allow, and Fanny soon sunk, overpowered by exertion, into a sound repose. Not so her companions; they held a whispering consultation on the measures to be pursued at Charlestown, if they were fortunate enough to get there undiscovered, which

the success of their journey, thus far, made rather probable—when it was agreed that Lillo must singly venture into the town, and so disguised, that the description should not bear the least resemblance. The printed paper was again examined, and contained a minute detail of their several persons, particularly Lillo's, whose florid complexion, short curled sandy hair, and open countenance, were noted down with great exactness. 'How shall we contrive to disguise these?' said Camelford—'Never fear, noble captain' replied Lillo, 'I engage to deceive even you, who know me so well; but, I think, a few hours rest will harm none of us—you two shall sleep, whilst I keep watch, and then, perhaps, your honours will do as much for me.'

His advice was taken; they stretched themselves upon the turf, and soon forgot their cares. Lillo, in the mean time, was not idle; he went to a little distance, gathered a few pieces of dry corkwood, struck a light, and burnt it to tinder—which done, he completely blacked his face and hair, and was, to appearance, a comely negro. 'Tis true, he had no looking-glass at his toilette; but he had Nature's first mirror—the lucid stream, which represented the metamorphose as a finished performance.

The two friends did not awake till Phœbus had driven his car to the very summit of the hill; Camelford then started up, and looking anxiously round, seemed to be recalling his situation to mind; he roused Thompson, and called Lillo, but no Lillo appeared; on a repetition of his name, Fanny awoke, and a black man sprang forward, who, in broken accents, said, 'You call Lillo, massa?'

'Yes, friend—have you seen a white man, with a ruddy complexion?'

'Me see nobody, but myself—me go wid you—me be Lillo.'

In some alarm for the fate of their companion they



jumped up, and were leaving the glade, in different directions, when Lillo set up a shout and a hearty laugh—‘Did not I say, noble captain, I would deceive even you, who know me so well? I think I may now venture into Charlestown, without fear of detection, and to insure our safety on the road, will continue this complexion till we get to sea; in the mean time, with your honour’s leave, I will take my turn on the turf, and you can amuse yourselves with the contents of the knapsack, and some apples which I have gathered.’

The surprise this speech occasioned, was only equalled by their joy. Detection was now less probable; and whilst Lillo was taking that repose, fatigue and a mind at ease made sweet, they followed his instructions, and had a pleasant regale, much enlivened by the cheerfulness of Fanny, who, in sleeping off her fatigue, seemed to have lost every care, save that of pleasing Camelford, whose grief for the melancholy fate of his mother cast a gloom over features naturally animated, and once glowing with hope and expectation.

Thompson, who had been a surgeon in Camelford’s regiment, was a man of cheerful habits, and some intelligence. His parents were English, but had settled in America previous to his birth, and were now no more; he was their only surviving offspring, and in quitting his country, forsook no ties of consanguinity, nor left a friend behind, whose interest was half so dear to him as the chosen companion, whose fortunes he was determined to share, and for whose welfare he would have sacrificed his life.

An interesting conversation was interrupted by the sound of a trumpet, on an eminence to the right; they wakened Lillo, who, ascending one of the highest trees, descried a party of horse directing their course at full speed towards the wood. These

might be their pursuers, or they were, perhaps, a reconnoitering party; at all events, it were best to avoid them; for whether English or Americans, their discovery would be equally fatal. Having penetrated the thickest part of the forest, they carefully concealed Fanny with leaves and boughs; after which they disposed of themselves in the best manner their situation would permit. The horses' hoofs were plainly heard, but, to their great joy, there was no pause; they passed the wood at full speed, and when the sound died away, our travellers dismissed their fears, and once more assembled in the glade.

At twilight they again set forward, with renovated spirit, and had journeyed several miles, when a large fire, upon a distant hill, attracted their attention; and just then a tinker and his dog overtaking them, to their inquiry he said, the light proceeded from a beacon, erected near the coast, a short distance from Charlestown. This was indeed pleasing intelligence; another day would conclude their fatigues—if not their cares, and they should have one enemy less to encounter.

The tinker, with great seeming kindness and hospitality, told them, they were welcome to pass the remainder of the night in his cottage, which was not more than a mile a-head; and though he could not accommodate them with beds, they should have refreshment and a good fire. This was an offer not to be rejected. Lillo, since the setting of the sun, had foretold a tempest, which now seemed approaching; the wind blew in squalls—heavy clouds obscured the moon—the thunder rolled in the distance, and large drops of rain began to descend. They quickened their pace; but ere they reached the cottage, the storm raged furiously.

On entering the tinker's miserable hut, they were received by a coarse, masculine woman, and two young men, her sons, of very unpromising appear-

ance : villainy was legibly printed on their tell-tale features, which, though unmarked by Fanny, whom fatigue had completely overpowered, was observed with suspicion by her friends, though without dread ; for in numbers they were equal, and well armed for defence.

Camelford requested, their young companion might, if possible, lie down, being quite overcome by indisposition and fatigue. The woman readily gave up her bed, and lighted Fanny to an adjoining room, nearly level with the kitchen—who, by way of remuneration took from her purse a dollar, and incautiously exposed the contents, which the woman gazed upon with an eager eye, and malign aspect. Fanny threw herself upon the dirty looking bed ; but when her hostess would have departed with the candle, she insisted upon its burning the remainder of the night, as, perhaps, indisposition might keep her waking.

The three friends took possession of an old wooden bench and some chairs, where Camelford and Thompson soon slept ; but Lillo, suspicious of the whole family, from certain looks which passed between the woman and her sons, when she retreated from Fanny's chamber, determined his slumbers should be feigned. As he lay ruminating on the probability of this night's adventure, a murmuring of voices, seemingly in consultation. issued from the cock-loft, where the tinker, his wife and sons had retired, when the travellers lay down to repose.

Presently the three men stole softly down the ladder, with each a rope, and tied Camelford and Thompson to the grate—at the same time taking away the pistols and cutlas ; Lillo, who lay upon his, they fastened to the bench, and retired. The moment their backs were turned, Lillo, with a clasp knife, liberated himself and his friends, and then lay down, as before.

Fanny had reposed about an hour, without being

able to sleep, when her eyes were attracted to the window by a slight noise, and she plainly perceived the face of a man, whose black-looking, ferocious countenance struck terror to her heart. She had a brace of pistols in her bosom, and had practised firing on the road; but it must be a case of extreme emergency that would tempt her to level one at a fellow creature. The face had disappeared, but her attention was drawn to the inside of the house, where she heard whispering; a footstep approached the chamber, and the door gently opened. Almost frantic with terror, she arose—cocked one of her pistols, and called out, ‘Whose there!’ No answer being returned, she took up her candle, to examine if there was a bolt, or any other means of fastening the door; but none appearing, she tied the latch fast with her garter—determined, whoever it was, they should not take her by surprise.

Once more extended on her comfortless bed, she kept her eye steadily fixed upon the door, and beheld a large knife inserted, which, by its motion, she conjectured to be in the act of cutting the garter. Again she jumped up, and setting her back against the wall, to give steadiness to her limbs, waited the approach of the intruders—each trembling hand holding a pistol.

The door opened without noise, and the three rogues entered; but, ere they had advanced two paces, her courage revived by the sight of Lillo, who was close behind them—his cutlass suspended over their heads. Emboldened by this sight, and possessing fortitude superior to her sex, she levelled her pistol at the tinker’s eldest son, and lodged the contents in his breast; at the same moment, Lillo, with one blow, nearly severed the tinker’s arm from his body, and, ere he could recover from his amazement, pointed a pistol at the head of the other son, who immediately fell on his knees, and implored their mercy.

Camelford and Thompson, roused by the noise, were on the spot in an instant, followed by the old wretch, who was the original cause of all this mischief, wringing her hands, and imploring them not to destroy her whole family.

By this time day began to peep; and after properly securing the tinker, his wife and son, that no alarm might be given till they were safe from pursuit, they set forward, keeping as far as possible from the public road, and arrived, without farther accident in the neighbourhood of Charlestown, where they were accommodated in a fisherman's hut, and Lillo sent to the quay, to make inquiry for a vessel bound to France. He returned before night, with the joyful intelligence that a transport, which had brought over troops, would sail with the first fair wind, and gladly receive them on board.

Lillo was fully employed the whole of the next day in making preparations for their departure—in which was included the purchase of ready made linen; and in the evening they went on board the *Atalanta*, Capt. Dubois bound for Brest—Lillo having previously changed his complexion.

Perfect composure, nearly approaching to joy, was the sensation felt by this little party. Pursuit and detection, which kept their minds in constant agitation, were followed by security, confidence and mutual regard. Equality was henceforth to be the ruling deity; one purse, one interest, one destiny, were to unite them. Prosperous gales and fine weather accompanied the voyage; the passage was quick, and the French coast in view, when an English privateer of great force, bore down upon them. Resistance was vain; they submitted with resignation to their fate, and went on board the English privateer, whose captain took possession of their money and jewels, according to the law of nations, but otherwise paid them every possible attention.

The privateer and her prize now stood towards Albion, and were nearly entering the Bristol channel, when a storm, awfully tremendous, overtook them. Their only chance of safety depended on sea-room, which, after beating about for several hours, was happily effected. The wind increased till it blew a perfect hurricane—the rain came down in torrents—the thunder, in dreadful peals, rattled over their heads, whilst each heavy sea threatened instant destruction.

'Twas now Camelford found himself a coward—not on his own account, but for his Fanny and his faithful companions, for whose dear sakes alone he suffered, and would joyfully have sacrificed existence.

Fanny, who desired not life, unconnected with Camelford, and whose only hope rested on contributing to his happiness, was calm amidst the strife of elements—one fate would attend them; and if they were not destined to live together, there was a comfort, even in death, preferable—much preferable to a separate existence.

The captain, who was a veteran in the service, had a perfect knowledge of the coast, and knew their safety could only be accomplished by keeping out to sea; but in the middle of the night the wind chopped about and drove them up St. George's channel. He endeavoured to make Holyhead, but found it impracticable. The sea raged with unabated violence; the vessel had sprung a leak, and nothing but the deepest knowledge and intrepidity kept her from going to pieces on the rocks which rise sublimely majestic on the coast of Peel Town, in the Isle of Man; but having cleared these, she drifted along the coast of Ireland, and on the second day, at noon, all hopes of safety were lost—both seamen and passengers were exhausted—the vessel no longer obeyed the helm, but drove before the wind, and the rocks of Cantyre, in Scotland, were right a-head. Destruction seemed inevitable, and all that remained was to provide for

their safety, as well as circumstances would permit. The captain and crew took to the boat; but no intreaty could prevail upon them to admit our four friends, which ultimately was the means of saving their lives; for ere the boat had advanced a cable's length, she filled—upset, and every soul perished! Camelford lashed Fanny to the only mast they had standing, and the next moment the vessel bilged, with a loud crash upon the rocks, and there remained, the sea dashing over her every instant.

In this dreadful situation they continued till day-break, the next morning, when the wind abated; the tide had considerably retreated, and left them nearly dry. Poor Fanny, who was in a state bordering on eternity, was carefully conveyed on shore, supported by Camelford and Lillo: they had scarcely begun their walk, ere some peasants, habited in the costume of the country, approached, and very humanely offered their services, which were as thankfully accepted.

Having conducted them to the nearest cottage, Fanny was put to bed and carefully attended; the rest were provided with dry clothing, and slept soundly and sweetly upon some clean straw in the barn. Towards evening the three friends arose, refreshed, and thankful for the mercy and kindness they had received. Fanny was feverish, and otherwise much indisposed; but Thompson having bled her, and recommended quietness, they walked down to the wreck, to see if any thing remained that would be useful, and found a small trunk in the cabin, which fortunately contained some changes of linen; and likewise a cask of rum, which Lillo carried, as a present, to their hospitable entertainers.

In a week Fanny was perfectly recovered, and united to her beloved Camelford, according to the laws of the Scotch kirk—having previously resumed her female habit. Camelford's next care was to send a

letter to his correspondent in America—to whose trust the management of his estate was left—fully descriptive of his situation, and enforcing the necessity of a speedy remittance, directed to the post office in Carlisle.

Before they took leave of these hospitable people, the minister of the parish, with unwearied assiduity, raised a subscription of twenty pounds, with which, and his blessing, he presented them, at their departure—at the same time making out a route to Glasgow, and inserting the names of several people, to whom they might use his name as a sufficient passport, for kindness and hospitality on the road.

Thus provided, our friends sat forward, and, as the worthy father predicted, were treated with brotherly love, wherever they stopped for refreshment or rest.

At the town of Dumbarton, Camelford's eyes were first greeted by the sight of a London newspaper; but his surprise and sorrow can scarcely be imagined when he saw a reward of one thousand pounds offered, on conviction of himself and Thompson, with their persons accurately described. This was a blow, indeed! as unwelcome as unexpected; all prospect of fixing himself and his beloved Fanny, in a comfortable retreat, was at an end; the officers of justice would hunt him from place to place, and concealment was their only chance against persecution—imprisonment—perhaps death; for, he doubted not, the advertisement was circulated all over Europe, since their being, at this time, in the British dominions, was contrary to all rules of probability.

They quitted Dumbarton precipitately, and travelled with speed, looking back, at every turn in the road, for their pursuers; and now first calling to mind, that, besides the advertisement, there was, perhaps, another cause of dread, namely, their being recognized for Americans—American soldiers, who had fought, in defence of their country, against the



inhabitants of the land, where now they sought refuge.

In the midst of these uncomfortable reflections, they were ascending a hill, from the summit of which they descried, in the plain beneath, a large fire, round which a merry group were dancing to the bagpipes; the moon threw a feeble light on the place, and rendered the scene highly picturesque. Camelford left his companions, to descend the hill slowly, and suddenly appeared amongst them. His majestic stature and undaunted mein threw an air of restraint upon the party; the eldest of whom inquired his errand—‘If,’ said he, ‘you want refreshment, sit down and partake—you are heartily welcome; our fare is coarse, but wholesome.’

Camelford informed him he had three companions, who, with himself would thankfully accept his offer; he then gave a shrill whistle, which brought Thompson, Lillo, and Fanny. Oaten cakes, eggs, butter and milk, were spread before them, whilst the younger part of the assembly resumed their dance. The party consisted of five men and three women, of tawny complexions; their habiliments were poor and ragged, but perfectly clean. After their repast, the senior of the party, who did not appear to be more than five and forty, brought a stone bottle, and presenting a horn of strong ale, said, ‘Eat, drink, and be merry—the gipseys of the North are never sad.’ The horn was passed round, and Camelford thus addressed them:—‘My worthy friends, your mode of living pleases me—where do you dwell?’

‘No where,’ replied the senior; ‘we are free rangers, and abide where convenience or fancy lead; we are under no controul, for we own no master; we render service wherever we find opportunity, and do as little harm as possible; we eat when hunger presses; drink to allay our thirst, and sleep—sometimes under the canopy of heaven, sometimes in barns, and

frequently in subterraneous caverns, unknown to any but ourselves.'

'But how are you maintained?'

'By our own industry; we neither rob nor plunder. A very little satisfies man's real wants; and those artificial ones, invented by luxury, and upheld by pride, we know not of. Regularity and exercise produce health and cheerfulness, and our homely fare is enjoyed with a degree of freedom and independence, the regular world are unacquainted with.'

Camelford drew his friends aside—'Shall we join these people? We have at present no visible means of livelihood, nor dare we shew ourselves in the world, to procure one; the time will come, I trust—but, for the present, suppose we try the gipsy life—what say you?'

Camelford's least wish was a law to these his attached friends, who cheerfully assented to the proposal, provided it was agreeable to the itinerants, whom he undertook to sound.

'Pray, my worthy host,' said Camelford, 'what induced you to adopt this strange, because uncommon, mode of life? Your education, I am convinced, has been above the common stamp—of course, you have seen better days.'

'Tis true, we have seen better days—have sat at great men's tables, and have, with holy bell, been knolled to church; but Nature having endued us with feelings, and Fortune been niggard of her means, we have withdrawn ourselves from a depraved world, where the glorious energies of the heart are stifled by self-interest, and suffering Humanity is looked upon with apathy and contempt.'

'Stranger,' said a young man, 'our parent has spoken the truth. Once a respectable merchant in Whitehaven, he was unwarily surprised into a lawsuit with a noble scoundrel in that neighbourhood, and though justice was evidently on our side, and

though we are told the equality of our blessed laws distributes unprejudiced and impartial decrees, to the poor as to the rich, yet this Colossus of wealth, this vast monopolizer of landed property, diverted the course of justice, by removing the cause from court to court, till we were ruined. Our estate was sold for the creditors, and with a few hundreds, we left the civilized world to its iniquity, and live as you see.'

'I am a son of the church,' exclaimed a portly man, apparently about forty; 'my father was a tallow chandler, but, determined to have one gentleman in his family, placed me at St. Bee's in Cumberland, where I qualified myself for preaching the gospel, and at the age of twenty-two, obtained a curacy, and performed the whole duty for twenty-four pounds a year, whilst the rector received four hundred for doing nothing: but that, you will say, was no business of mine—so let it pass. Being a little too conscientious, perhaps, I refused to read the Athanasian Creed, I refused to deal out d—n—n to those who could not comprehend what was allowed to be incomprehensible, and lost my situation. Disgusted with these dignified drones, who preach sometimes, but seldom practise, I procured a sum from my father under the idea of going to London; instead of which I joined my friends, and lead a life of innocence—I may say usefulness.'

'I am,' said a comely looking man, 'a younger brother. My father had a great attachment to every thing that bore the face of antiquity; old systems of all kinds he venerated, particularly the law of primogeniture; and though his estate, of four thousand pounds a year, was unentailed, he left the whole to my elder brother, and five hundred pounds a piece to myself and sister, who sits smiling by my side. Our brother, who inherited all his father's pride, looked upon us as aliens to his blood, and gave us

understand, the sooner we could provide for ourselves, the better. Accordingly, my poor Mary was put apprentice to a milliner, and I began to study the law ; but not much liking the quirks and quibbles of the profession, I engaged myself as steward, or bailiff, to an old nobleman, from whom I received a handsome salary, took a house, and placed Mary at the head of it. His lordship was very infirm ; repeated attacks of the gout had made great inroads on his constitution ; but he had a young and lovely wife, and some beautiful children, to superintend whose education, the curate of a neighbouring parish lived constantly at the manor house. He was young, comely, and insinuating ; his manners were soft and pliant ; every girl in the parish was anxious to attract his notice, till, by accident, the handsome curate was discovered to be a married man, though in a state of separation from his wife.

‘I had always a suspicion that this was a wolf in sheep’s clothing—he was too civil by half. The attention he shewed his patron was rather that of a son than a servant, and his lordship in return, treated him as though he had been really so. With regard to my lady, he was her constant companion ; in all her riding or pedestrian excursions, who so agreeable as the tutor ? Were a new novel or play brought home, who could read it with half such effect as the Rev. Mr. Black ? His lordship always retired early, and his reverence was then particularly useful ; ready for a game at cards ; a little music ; or he could so agreeably wile away the hours, by interesting conversation on subjects the most *tender*.

‘One day it was my unfortunate lot to make a discovery in the garden, which confirmed, what before was merely suspicion, that their attachment was warmer than was quite consistent with my lord’s happiness. To be an unconcerned spectator was neither agreeable to my character nor situation, and

a hasty determination to unmask the hypocrite was immediately put in execution, by the following lines, addressed to his lordship :

‘Your lordship is imposed upon. The writer of this does not condemn on mere suspicion; he has ocular demonstration. Black is a man that ‘can smile, and smile, and be a villain’—the worst of villains—the destroyer of his benefactor’s honour. Nothing actually criminal may have passed, but, if not nipped in the bud, soon will.

‘A sincere regard for your lordship’s happiness alone stimulates me to write what must give you pain to read; for ‘when ingratitude bars the dart of injury, the wound feels double pain.’ Let the remedy be applied in time, and, perhaps, all dangerous symptoms may cease.’

‘In a quarter of an hour I was summoned to his lordship’s room, whom I found in a fit, with the letter in his clenched hand. My lady and the parson soon entered; and, as his lordship’s hands relaxed, she snatched the letter, and read it—confusion strongly painted in her countenance; Black likewise looked it over. When my lord recovered, he turned from them with disgust, and said, ‘Mason, who wrote that letter?’

‘I did, my lord.’

‘And what did you witness in the summer house?’

‘I repeated with minuteness, every thing I had seen and heard, and was then requested to retire. To make short of my story, this sanctified, consummate hypocrite had art enough to persuade my lord of his innocence, and convinced him the whole was a fabrication of mine, from revenge for his having frequently checked me for swearing. The result was natural; my dismissal was the price at which the reconciliation was purchased; but, determined on exposure, I wrote a pamphlet, under the title of ‘The Black Sheep,’ in which I faithfully related the whole transaction. The enraged parties commenced

an action for a libel, and I was cast in four hundred pounds damages.

‘Determined not to be wholly ruined, I collected our little property, and set off, with my sister under my arm, leaving the lawyers to pay themselves by the sale of my household furniture.

‘I beg your pardon for taking up so much time, in rather relating other people’s adventures than my own; but without this, you would perhaps, have still been ignorant, that in this country, ‘the greater the truth, the greater the libel.’ I have not told you, gentle strangers, how I met with my present associates, nor is it necessary; that we did meet, has been to me a source of happiness, which I hope, will long continue.’

Camelford, much pleased with the conversation, and highly approving the sentiments of this little party, in return, made known the adventures and present uncomfortable state of himself and friends, and frankly proposed a junction with the happy and independent society of ‘The Gipseys of the North.’

‘Camelford,’ said the senior, ‘you, your consort, and friends, are right welcome amongst us; and I think, judging from appearances, the event of our fortunate rencontre will be for the good of the society. Your independent spirit, strength, address, and knowledge of mankind, joined to a physiognomy which bespeaks candour and humanity, have formed you in my mind, for our leader. Henceforward, then, be our captain; that post has heretofore devolved on me as senior of the party; but, though I will cheerfully undertake the management of our expenses and domestic concerns, it requires talents, such as you probably possess, to guide us in our more active pursuits—such for instance, as redressing grievances, foiling the machinations of the midnight assassin, and many other evils, which we have sworn to remedy,

to the full extent of our power—say, will you accept this post of confidence and danger?’

‘Most willingly—the offer is gratifying to my self-love, and your opinion shall stimulate my future actions. I pledge myself, as you have done, to succour the distressed, to defend the poor against the encroachments of the mighties of the land, to assist the weak, and despoil the lawless ruffians, who sacrifice every principle of justice and humanity. One thing I must observe—arms are, doubtless, necessary in some of your excursions; but I have made a vow, never again to trust myself with sanguinary weapons—the unfortunate death of my poor mother recurring to my mind; therefore this powerful cudgel must, at all times, and upon every occasion, be my only defence; for never will I again rob a fellow-creature of existence, unless impelled by self-defence, and that the most urgent.’

They now all arose. Camelford was formally introduced to each individual as their leader, and, as such, was joyfully received. The senior, who was their minstrel, threw his pipes over his shoulder, and led the way towards a thick wood. After pacing a meandering path, which led to the foot of a hill, the five men drew forth their lanterns, illumined them, and led the way through a cavity large enough to admit the human form; they proceeded for about ten yards, through a passage narrow and difficult to pass, when on a sudden, it opened into a large, lofty cave (branching out into several smaller ones) furnished with stone benches and tables, and a variety of culinary utensils. The four recesses were kept exclusively for sleeping-rooms, and appropriated to the senior, his two sons and their wives, and Mary Mason; but the former relinquished his to Camelford and Fanny. The others, consisting of the parson, the lawyer, Dr. Thompson, Lillo, and the senior,

occupied one end of the cavern, raised from the ground with pieces of wood, on which was spread plenty of dry heath, with sheets and blankets.

At break of day they arose, and broke their fast with bread and milk, purchased the day before, at a farm-house; after which our friends were each fitted with a habit from the general stock. A simple preparation was next applied, which changed the tint of the complexion to a deep brown.

They had scarcely completed their metamorphosis, when a loud whistle was heard at the entrance of the cave, accompanied by the barking of a dog. Camelford seized his cudgel—‘Be not alarmed,’ said the senior, ‘’tis only the shepherd, a simple, honest creature, who resides about two miles off, on a small farm, and is of great use in bringing us eggs, butter, and milk.’

They went out, and received the honest man with a hearty shake by the hand—‘I’ve brought,’ said he, ‘your milk; but I wish you could in future, send for it—I’m fearful of coming so far from home.’

‘What have you to fear?’ said Camelford, struck with the innocence of his character.

‘I know not,’ replied the man, ‘but my heart is very heavy, and all on account of my bonny bairn—my Jenny, who is all I have left in this sad world to comfort me. Last night I heard a noise at my door, and found a young man, a neighbour, who appeared so ill, he was unable to move without assistance. Well—I put him into my bed, and, lying down by his side, slept till morning; when I got up, I found Sandy gone, and Jenny crying by the fire. The ungrateful loon whilst I slept, stole to my daughter’s bed, where, by spells and witch-craft, he accomplished his purpose, when she prayed him to make her an honest woman, laughed in her face, and left the house. Ah, wae is me! If any thing should come of it, my bairn must do penance in a white sheet, or



else be excommunicated, and either of these would go nigh to break my heart. Now, I know you gipseys can tell fortunes—for did not you tell me where to find my cow?—therefore do let me know the worst at once; will shame come to Jenny, or will Sandy make her an honest woman?

‘Friend,’ said the senior, looking with much solemnity at the lines of his hand, ‘if wedding can make her an honest woman, she shall be one—this man will marry your daughter, and you will be happy.’

‘You don’t say so,’ replied the shepherd—the tear of gratitude running down his sun-burnt cheek—‘bless you, bless you, for this good news! But how do you know all this?’

‘Inquire not, but be in readiness with your daughter at eight o’clock; at which hour you will bestow her on Sandy.’

The shepherd having received pay for his milk, stumped briskly towards his home, placing as much dependance on the senior’s word, as if the ceremony had already passed.

‘Now, captain,’ said the senior to Camelford, ‘you will have an opportunity of shewing your ingenuity and address, and prove yourself worthy of the title we have invested you with.’

In the close of the evening, Camelford, with four of the party, having arrayed themselves in black from the general wardrobe, left their retreat, and, mounting the hill, soon arrived at the shepherd’s cot, where they found him seated before a peat fire, and Jenny weeping by his side. Having inquired the way to Sandy’s abode, Camelford told the father and daughter to follow them in half-an-hour; in the mean time they approached Sandy’s house, and looking through the window, saw him seated alone, and apparently either asleep, or in deep meditation. They entered without hesitation, to the surprise and

alarm of the young man, whom Camelford's commanding height, aided by his stout cudgel, filled with terror and astonishment. He jumped up, and, in a trembling voice, asked, whom they wanted?

'You!' said Camelford—'you have betrayed an innocent young woman, and must repair the injury. We are deputed to examine and rectify these kinds of abuses, and if the parties prove refractory, our power is unlimited; but here, I trust, the task will be an easy one—you are not a hardened sinner; we have the gift of reading men's secret thoughts, and yours, at this moment, are filled with sorrow for the wrongs you have done Jenny M'Pherson, and an anxious desire to make reparation. By my gift of second sight, I foresee the poor girl and her father are now on their road hither, and you will this night—nay, this very hour, receive her as your wife. Come, man, look up with confidence; though we have such power, we harm only the wicked, therefore are you safe.'

Jenny and her father approached the door, and Camelford leading her forward, said, 'Is this the girl you have injured?'

'Oh, Jenny, Jenny!' blubbered the young man, 'you shall indeed be my wife. This gentleman has told me the strangest things—he knows every thing, even what I was thinking of, though I never opened my lips to him.'

'Come,' said Camelford, 'our time is precious: this worthy minister will do his office.'

The parson pulled out a book, and repeating enough of the marriage ceremony to make it binding, they took their leave, and left three people as happy as ignorance, innocence, and credulity could make them.

The time now arrived which they usually passed in the neighbourhood of Loch Lomond. Prepara-

tions were accordingly made, and the shepherd and his pony engaged to accompany them. This man had been a soldier in his youth, and had not yet forgot his broad sword exercise. Camelford took lessons on the road, and, 'ere they parted, was deeper in the science than his master; this proved in the end of great utility, enabling him to use his stick in times of danger, as a powerful defence.

'Twas evening when our party arrived at Ben Lomond. At the base of this stupendous mountain issues a spring from an arched cavity in the rock, so formed by nature, that an entrance can only be obtained by going through this shallow rivulet; of course the extent of the subterranean was seldom explored, nay, its very existence scarcely known even to the inhabitants of this delightful spot; it had, however, been the occasional rendezvous of our itinerants, for more than two years.

The honest shepherd was amply rewarded, and dismissed; when Robert, the youngest of the senior's sons, and the junior of the party, pulled off his shoes and stockings, crossed the stream, and was instantly invisible, but returned in a few minutes, bearing a broad plank, which properly placed, formed a safe and commodious bridge; when they had all passed it was removed, their lanterns lighted, and preceded by the senior, they advanced a considerable way, ere they arrived at a spacious vault, formed in the solid rock, in many respects convenient, and perfectly dry.

'My friends,' said the senior, 'you are welcome to the cave of Ben Lomond, known but to few. By our own industry we made it habitable two years ago, adding from time to time, such conveniences as contribute greatly to our comfort.

'Tis nearly eight months since we left it; yet our furniture and utensils remain in *statu quo*, which plainly shews there have been no intruders. We must add a little fresh ling to our beds, which you

perceive, are perfectly dry, and then seek that repose I am sure, our females stand in need of.'

In the morning the whole party took a ramble to the summit of Ben Lomond, which affords a most delightful and extensive prospect. Camelford, leaving his companions, who, seated on a rock, were attentively listening to the senior's description of the adjacent country, strolled towards a clump of trees on the left, meditating on the singularity of his situation, the uncommon events of his short life, and the untimely fate of his mother—a subject that constantly harrassed his mind, and gave a melancholy tinge to his care-worn countenance—lost in reflection, he had advanced to the furthest extremity of the mountain, and was meditating a return, when voices assailed his ears; the speakers were not discernible, but the noise seemed to proceed from a jutting rock, a few yards beneath.

Curiosity was never one of Camelford's foibles, and he was turning back to join his companions, when the following sentence arrested his attention :—

'Gray is our man; but as he is well prepared for defence, the only way to secure ourselves is, to set fire to the house—murder them as they come out, and then secure the property.'

'Aye, aye,' said another voice, 'that will be the only way. To-night he returns from Glasgow, where he is gone to receive two thousand pounds; that, with his other valuable property, will be the making of us.'

Camelford's blood recoiled with horror at this cool determination to rob and murder a whole family. The impulse of the moment was to jump down and seize these miscreants; but a little reflection convinced him of the danger and uncertainty of this plan. He therefore lay close amongst the stunted pines, in hopes they would make him fully master of their

plans; but here he was disappointed. They were already on the move; he heard their retreating steps, and, peeping over the summit, saw five stout men, who, unsuspecting of their communication, were leisurely winding down the hill. He returned greatly agitated, to his friends, who were still seated, and listening to the sweet air of 'Roy's Wife,' which Mary Mason sung with great effect.

Lillo inquired the meaning of Camelford's emotion, who related correctly, the two speeches he had overheard, and wished it were possible to counteract their devilish intention.

'It is in our power,' replied the lawyer. I know this Gray well; he is a very respectable grazing farmer, and resides about six miles from hence, on the Glasgow road; let us instantly go there, and take proper precautions.'

Returning to the cave, Camelford, Thompson, Lillo, the parson, and the lawyer, equipped themselves in sailors' habits with each a club, and (except Camelford) a brace of pistols, and commenced their walk, leaving the senior and his two sons to protect the females.

Gray's house was large, and of great antiquity; it consisted of the main building and two wings; at the end of the east wing was a large pond, or reservoir of water, through which by pipes, that element was conducted to every story of the house. Camelford was deputed to open the business, whilst the others kept aloof, for fear their numbers and appearance should cause alarm instead of confidence.

Going to the house, he inquired for Mr. Gray. 'He was not at home.'

'Could he speak with Mrs. Gray?' 'Yes; there was nobody with her, but a neighbouring minister, upon a week's visit to the family.'

Being ushered into the parlour, he beheld a middle aged lady, in a puritannical dress, fanaticism

painted in every line of her countenance. By her sat a good looking, smoothed faced man, in black—the very prince of deceit, if there is any truth in Lavater.

‘My business, madam,’ said Camelford, ‘is for your private ear.’

The gentleman got up, though with seeming reluctance.

‘Stay, good sir—there is nothing a true christian ought to do, that an enlightened minister ought not to hear. Whatever you have to say, young man, may be freely spoken—I have no concealments with this pious teacher.’

Camelford soon perceived he had to deal with a weak, credulous enthusiast, and (if appearances were true) an artful hypocrite——‘Madam, by chance I became acquainted with a secret, on which your property and the lives of all your family depend. To-morrow night, a set of miscreants have laid a plan to fire your house—murder you all, and possess themselves of your money and valuables.’

‘God forbid!’ she exclaimed, lifting up her hands.

‘Aye, God forbid!’ echoed the preacher; ‘but I should hope your exemplary life, and the faith you have just now expressed in the promises, would preserve you from fear, and despair of the divine protection.’

‘Ah, good sir! I confess my error—I am but a weak vessel, unless strengthened by your heavenly counsel. I will trust—for sure I am, security and blessing attend the house where you reside.’ Then turning to Camelford—‘Pray, how did you learn this secret? You are a sailor by your dress.’

Camelford said, he had been at sea, and then explained how he got possession of his knowledge. At the conclusion, the minister assumed a satyrical smile, shook his head, and, in fine silver tones, observed—‘Though I have as much faith in sacred things as falls to the lot of frail humanity, yet, in temporal

matters, it behoves the elect to be cautious, of giving implicit credit to information that comes through such a doubtful channel.—Your account of this plot, young man, carries an air of great improbability. In the first place, it is scarcely credible, that any set of men should be so far given up to the devil, as to plan a deed which would end in their final d—n—n. In the next place, granting them to be the agents of Lucifer, is it likely they should assemble where you have described, and speak loud enough to be heard, on a subject of this nature? In the third place——'

'Stop, sir,' cried Camelford, who, with difficulty, had contained himself during this harrangue—'this is a mode of treatment I am not used to, and cannot suffer. I am liberal enough, however, to grant, you have some cause for your suspicion, which makes me overlook certain parts of your offensive speech. Your dress bespeaks your profession, which, though no cloak for impertinence, preserves you from chastisement. I came with an intent to serve and save this family; but since my words are doubted, and I can bring forward no corroboration of my veracity, I leave you, madam, to your fate, and the protection of this ghostly comforter.'

He left the room abruptly, and was joining his friends, when the minister followed him, sent by the lady's fears, to request his return; but in vain—he indignantly turned upon his heel, and walked away.

When he had related his reception, the lawyer, biting his lip, said, 'I would give a little finger to have hold of that smooth dissembler; I saw him follow you to the door, and know him to be a villain—the wretch who caused my ruin—the hypocritical Parson Black! Let us return to the house and seize him.'

'Hold!' said Camelford—'no improper violence. Let not the gipseys of the North, who are united and

pledged to serve their fellow-creatures, trample on their own laws. Revenge is a mean, a contemptible passion, calculated only to gratify little minds—let ours soar above it. But come—we must think of more momentous concerns, than reviling parsons and old women—this house must be saved. What course shall we pursue ?’

By the parson’s advice, they adjourned to a public house on the road side, which Mr. Gray must necessarily pass, on his way home. At the close of day, accordingly, as he was riding leisurely along, Camelford accosted him, and, with his usual address, related the whole affair. Though much surprised and shocked, he implicitly believed him, and gratefully consulted Camelford on the means likely to defeat this diabolical scheme.

Camelford, finding him a man of sense and liberality, related the reception he had met with from Mrs. Gray and the parson ; at which he smiled, and, shaking his head replied, ‘ We have all our weak sides, and fanaticism is hers ; but she is a good woman in the main. Parson Black is a great favourite with the enlightened, particularly the females. Lord —, my landlord, allows him to reside in his house, in which, to be sure, he has been the cause of a good deal of misunderstanding, and, indeed, the ruin of the steward. Poor man, he was a good, worthy creature, but has not been heard of, in these parts, for some years.’

Camelford now made known his plan for the protection of Mr. Gray and his house—‘ In the first place, you have two thousand pounds about you ; this together with your other portable property, I should recommend you to deposit in some place of safety ; for though I make no doubt we shall secure these marauders, yet, as they have probably placed combustibles about the building, the fire may break out where it is least looked for, and consequently en-



hance the danger. Your first business must be, to make strict search in your dwelling and offices. Arm every man about the premises, and at nine o'clock I will bring four powerful auxiliaries, men of tried courage, who are used to hardship, and fearless of danger. Order your servants to admit us without inquiry, and I will dispose of them in the best possible manner.'

Gray, with a thousand thanks, promised to obey his instructions—'But how my friend shall I ever repay you?'

Not a word of that nature Mr. Gray—we have as yet done nothing. But time wears. We must be on the alert. I think it would be as well not to inform the female part of your family, in which I include the parson; their fears would only create confusion and retard our exertions.

Gray, the moment he got home, summoned his two labourers, and made a fruitless search; no combustibles were discovered, nor any appearance that could at all lead to suspicion. In the mean time, the five friends formed their plans; but previous to any definitive conclusion, it was necessary to be on the premises; where they arrived, and knocking at the door Gray admitted them himself—'Walk in, my worthy protectors,' said he, 'I have placed a slight repast in the next room'——'Stop,' replied Camelford; 'no refreshment passes our lips till the business we are come upon is completed—therefore, every man to his post—Thomson and Lillo, guard the door, which, as a trap, leave unlocked, and a little open.' The other two he placed in a similar situation at the back door, which led to the garden. He himself was stationed in a large front parlour, with the shutters open, so, that, by the light of the moon, he could see any one who passed the front of the house, and, by throwing up the window, jump out in a moment, should occasion require it. Gray and his men para-

ded round the house with their fowling pieces and each a broad sword, buttoned inside their coats.

Eleven o'clock struck—twelve—one—but nothing appeared. They now gave up the watch, and concluded their fears, for that night at least, were over. Camelford, not having heard any precise time mentioned for the attack, imagined the same, and reluctantly consented to take refreshment.

The strong ale had gone once round, when the screams of women, from the east wing called their attention—'To your posts,' said Camelford—'Mr. Gray take your men to the protection of the females; for, I am convinced, this part of the house will be the main object of their attack.' He was now alone. Opposite to where he sat, anxiously expecting every moment, to be called into action, was a large pier glass, that nearly covered one end of the room. Casually looking towards it, he saw a man enter from a door behind him, and brandish a cutlas over his head. Quick as lightning, he started up, his chair received the blow; and ere the villain could recover himself, Camelford lent him a stroke with his cudgel that laid him prostrate. At that moment the chimney board fell, from behind which, two ferocious monsters rushed forth, armed with broad swords, with which they struck desperately, though evidently without skill for Camelford parried them both. With his back against the wainscoat, he acted on the defensive, till perceiving an opening, he thrust his stick into the face of one, and seconded it with a blow at the other, which, had it taken effect, must have dealt destruction; but his opponent received it on his sword, with such force, that the cudgel broke in two, and left him at the mercy of the merciless, who now conceived his conquest sure; for though his companion was rendered incapable, from the anguish of his eye, which was out of the socket, there could be little to fear from an opponent, whose only

defence was a broken stick. He, therefore, made a deadly blow, which Camelford warded off with the chair; but such a defence must ultimately fail him. Fortunately at this time, he stumbled over the sword of the dead man—flung the chair, with all his might, at his only remaining foe, and, stooping, in a moment stood on his defence, sword in hand.

The other wretch had, by this time, replaced his eye, and, though in agony, advanced to support his comrade, when Gray entered the room, and levelling his piece, shot him through the head—at the same time that Camelford, with the first blow, broke his antagonists right arm above the elbow; they then tied him, neck and heels, and, without stopping even for gratulation, flew in search of their other friends. Proceeding along the passage, Camelford stumbled over something, which, on lowering the candle, gave to his distracted view the body of Lillo!

Another scream from the women, called for immediate assistance. On reaching the east wing they found it on fire—whilst, from a bed-chamber at the extremity, two men were dragging forth a third, in his shirt, with one of the servant's flannel petticoats under his arm. This was no other than the reverend Mr. Black, whom they mistook for Mr. Gray, and were threatening with instant death, unless he delivered up his money. Close behind followed the lawyer, who, with his cudgel, appeared ready to dispatch one of them; but, seeing the parson was their victim, hesitated, from the hatred he bore him.

'Strike!' exclaimed Camelford, rushing forward, which so alarmed the thieves, that letting go their prey, they made an attempt to escape, but were opposed by the lawyer, who used his club with as much dexterity as he had formerly done his pen; and assisted by Camelford and Gray, they were soon secured; whilst the minister, who supposed them to be all one party, no sooner found himself at liberty, than

he made the best of his way down stairs, and out of the back door.

Without stopping to breathe, Camelford called their attention to the fire, as yet confined to one room, unconnected with the house except by a gallery, and out of which issued volumes of smoke. As they were about to enter, Mrs. Gray—wildness and distraction in her looks, screamed out, ‘My child! my child!—Oh! will nobody save him?’ Camelford immediately apprehending the business, rushed through the fire, and at the furthest extremity of the apartment, beheld a cradle; but, ere he could secure the sleeping infant, part of the floor he had passed, fell in, and rendered his return impracticable. The window, though only the second story in front, was a tremendous height backwards, and overlooked the water before mentioned; by the side of which, the whole family were now assembled—anxiety and distress in every countenance.

Camelford, whose presence of mind never deserted him, dashed out the window-frame, and standing in the space with the child in his arms, called out,

‘Is the water deep?’

‘Yes.’

‘So much the better’—and throwing himself out, amidst the screams of the spectators, was for a few moments immersed in water; but when he arose, the smile of benevolence irradiated his countenance; he swam to the side, and delivering up his charge, fell into the arms of Mason—overcome by a variety of emotions, that certainly require no explanation.

To the scene that followed, few pens can do justice; it was a mixture of joy, gratitude, and brotherly love, of which Camelford was the object; and, to complete their satisfaction, the first person who met their eye on entering the house, was Lillo, under the hands of Thompson, and in a situation that precluded all serious apprehension. He had been knocked

down and violently stunned; for which rest was necessary, and the same being recommended to Camelford, they each retired to a warm bed.

The gallery of communication being burnt away, the fire was suffered to extend itself on the detached building; the night was calm, and apprehension on that account, ceased.

Thompson was incapable from accident, of being useful to the cause. When Lillo was knocked down, two men with cutlasses, attacked him; but retreating, he entered a room, and forcibly shut the door, which, when he again attempted to open, he found had fastened itself by a spring-lock; from which duration he was not released, till the labourers and some neighbours, attracted by the fire, brought in the culprits, as a temporary place of confinement.

The parson and Mason had an engagement with the same two rogues, but lost them in the dark; nor did they appear again, till dragging in the Rev. Mr. Black, from the bed-chamber of Molly the dairy-maid, who was comely to look upon—nay, passing fair, in the eyes of the preacher.

A bowl of hot punch was smoking on the table, and proved no unacceptable relief, after the exertions of the night, when Mrs. Gray regretted the absence of the minister—‘but the pious soul was, no doubt, offering up prayers and thanksgivings for their singular deliverance.’

Mason, whose mind still panted for revenge, beckoned Thompson out of the room, and giving some hint of his intention, they sallied forth in quest of this sanctified debauchee. The back door, through which he was seen to emigrate, led into the garden; this they entered, and called him by name, but no answer was returned. It then struck Thompson, that perhaps, the crafty priest had taken refuge in the ‘*Temple of Cloacina*,’ situated at the end of a long walk. As they proceeded, Mason gathered a bunch

of nettles, and Thompson again called. A trembling voice now answered, 'For heaven's sake, gentlemen, spare my life—money I have none—I am not Mr. Gray.'

'We know that, reverend sir,' replied Thompson; the good Mrs. Gray has sent you some warm clothing, and requires your pious company as soon as you are dressed.' This had the desired effect, and brought out the half-starved minister, requesting he might have the warm clothes.

'That you shall sir,' replied Thompson; and taking hold of both his hands, had him in a moment, as completely horsed as ever was school-boy, and Mason gave him as good a flagellation with the nettles, as if Dr. Busby himself had been employed in the operation, calling out at intervals, 'Remember Mason, the steward—repent your evil deeds.'

In vain he roared and struggled—Thompson was strong, and he knew the punishment to be just.

At length the apparent mildness of his disposition forsook him; he lost all his christian patience, and swore like a trooper. The nettles worn to a stump, and the lawyer's revenge, in some measure, satisfied, he was released, whilst Mason tauntingly inquired, 'How do you like your *warm clothing*, now you are *dressed*?' But instead of an answer, the usually slow-moving minister took to his heels, completely blistered from the shoulders downwards.

They now returned to the house, and informed Mrs. Gray, they had found the Rev. Mr. Black in a certain place, but so benumbed with cold, they were obliged to apply stimulants, which had the desired effect, and being entirely warmed, they had no doubt but a night's rest would perfectly restore him.

The good Mrs. Gray thanked them for their care, and had no doubt, the pious man would remember them in his prayers.

‘Yes, madam,’ replied the lawyer, significantly, ‘I think he will not easily forget us.’

The sun had risen, and our three friends returned to the cave, to ease the anxiety their longer absence would occasion. Camelford and Lillo appeared at Mr. Gray’s dinner-table; but the Rev. Mr. Black was unable to move, which was attributed solely to cold, as none of the party were acquainted with the *dressing* he had received. After their sociable repast, Gray intreated Camelford to name some reward—‘If it were even half my possessions’ said he, ‘it would be inadequate to the service you and your companions have rendered me.’

‘We have done our duty, sir,’ replied Camelford, ‘and that, to minds neither ambitious nor sordid, is sufficient gratification; nay, it affords a delight infinitely superior to any that wealth can give, namely, self-approbation.’

‘But I shall see you again,’ said Gray, ‘your dress bespeaks you strangers and sea-faring men—you are not leaving the country immediately, I hope.’

‘Not immediately—we will see you again before we depart, and for the present, take our leave.’

Their arrival at the cave was greeted with heartfelt joy. ‘We have heard the whole of your adventure,’ said the senior, ‘and I, more than ever, exult in my penetration; such presence of mind, fortitude, and courage, were surely never before united in so young a subject. Your amiable partner has wept at your danger, and smiled at your success; my eyes, too, have played the woman, on purpose I believe, to keep her in countenance.’

Four months passed away in this romantic country pleasantly and usefully. The poor and persecuted blessed their footsteps; the rich oppressor stood in awe; and the people in general, who neither feared their power nor depended on their succour, revered

the strangers, whose habitation no one knew, but whose persons every one respected.

The three housebreakers were brought to trial and condemned, at which the whole country rejoiced; for, from their own confession, it appeared they had, for years, committed the most atrocious enormities.

The Americans left not a nook for twenty miles round unexplored. Their collection of natural curiosities and drawings (executed by Thompson) were the most correct and varied, and to the artist or virtuoso would have been invaluable.

The period of their sojourning in Scotland expired, and their next encampment was in a distant part of Westmoreland, for which due preparations were made. But as Fanny was far advanced in pregnancy, it was decided that she and Camelford should take the diligence from Glasgow to Kendal. A very particular direction to Furness Abbey was given by the senior to Camelford, with a purse containing ten guineas; and the pedestrians set forward, disguised as usual.

Camelford was habited, in every respect, as a gentleman, and at Glasgow purchased a travelling coat for Fanny. They proceeded with safety and comfort till the last stage to Carlisle, when Fanny was attacked with violent spasms, and otherwise much indisposed; she bore however, her pains with great fortitude, till they stopped to water the horses at Gretna Green, when it was found impossible to proceed. The next day her disorder increased. Medical assistance was sent for to Carlisle; but, ere it arrived, a miscarriage took place which left her in imminent danger.

Camelford was in a state of distraction; he never left her apartment, except to superintend the culinary preparations recommended by the physician; for,



in cookery, the Gretna Green kitchen was woefully deficient.

A fortnight elapsed before Fanny was declared convalescent; the third week she was able to take the air, and the gentlemen of the faculty declined any further attendance.

When Camelford had satisfied these worthy practitioners, he found himself in possession of an exhausted purse, and a long bill at the inn undischarged. He wrote a descriptive letter to the senior, which would doubtless bring the desired supply, though he had many painful fears of its not finding their abode; and these were soon realized, in the dreadful certainty that he had by some accident, mislaid the direction. Every place was searched—every inquiry made, but it was irretrievable.

A perfect stranger, without supplies, or the means of raising them—with an invalid companion, whose situation required indulgence and composure of mind—his state was truly deplorable, the more so, from having no one to consult; for Fanny was ignorant of their circumstances, and for the sake of her health, he wished to keep her so.

Under pretence of inquiring about the coach, he one day went to Carlisle, thinking it possible, a letter from the senior might be at the post-office, who, he knew, would be uneasy at their delay. There was a letter, but not from Furness Abbey; it was from America, and the postage reduced him to the last shilling. The contents stated that his friend had transmitted three hundred pounds to a bank in London, and that the danger of his return was as great as ever.

The former part of this intelligence was incapable of affording Camelford pleasure; three pounds at the present moment, would have been more acceptable than three hundred in perspective. He returned to

his Fanny, melancholy and dejected, and in the overflowing of his heart, made a full disclosure of their situation, which she received with that firmness and magnanimity, the characteristics not only of her country, but individually of herself. Folding him in her arms, she painted in glowing colours, their many wonderful escapes both by sea and land, and her firm reliance on *Him*, who suffereth not a sparrow to fall, without his especial notice; ‘reflect, my beloved companion,’ she continued, ‘on the attachment of our friends, and depend upon it succour will speedily arrive through their means; the senior, one of the best of men, is anxiously concerned for our welfare; even were he not so, we have a firm reliance on the attachment of Thompson and Lillo, who will move heaven and earth to discover our retreat, which, lying on the direct road, between Ben Lomond and Kendal, can easily be traced.’

The next morning two chaises drove up to the door, with each a young couple, who required the officiating priest of Hymen. Camelford, whilst loitering about, inquired of the postilions, whence they came, and if both couples were going to be married?

‘Only one,’ was the answer—‘the young looking pair, who are very rich, and pay their way like emperors.’

Trivial as this information appeared, it had an instantaneous effect on Camelford. He had examined the countenance of this young bridegroom, as he walked several times before his window, and saw nothing repulsive; on the contrary, he fancied its general character was benevolence, with a slight tincture of credulity.

He immediately formed a plan, and instantaneously reduced it to practice; the prelude to which was, drawing the following bill;—

‘Glasgow, Sept. 12, 1776.’

£.10 0 0

‘Three months after date, I promise to pay the sum of ten pounds to the person who has confidence enough in me to exchange this note, and to stand his friend, though at the hazard of my life, whenever circumstances demand it.

‘CHARLES CAMELFORD.’

Camelford had not the smallest idea that any person could be found credulous enough to give cash for such a production ; but he thought it would lead to an explanation, and if the gentleman’s heart was as large as his reputed purse, good to him must follow.

It has been shewn, in the first volume of these Memoirs, how his plan succeeded ; he had to deal with a youth, unversed in the ways of the world—unacquainted with the nature of bills, and unsuspecting of fraud, both by education and habit.

Camelford having written the above, kissed Fanny—bade her keep up her spirits, and promised to be with her early in the evening. He once more retraced his steps to Carlisle, arrived at the Bush inn, a few minutes before the wedding party returned—introduced himself as has been related, and to his astonishment, and indeed confusion, received the money—hastened from the house, and was at Gretna Green, before he had convinced himself that such things were. In the course of conversation, he made himself master of Romney’s place of abode, with a firm determination to restore the money the first opportunity.

On his return he found Fanny in tears ; for the landlord had been importunate, even to rudeness.

‘I do not blame him,’ said Camelford ; he knows us not, and cannot afford to lose money by stran-

gers.' He then related his adventure, at which Fanny shook her head—'It is true', he continued, 'I have done an action that cannot be defended, except upon the plea of necessity; but as the young man shall be repaid both principal and interest, we must reconcile our minds, by calling it a loan, though rather surreptitiously obtained.'

Having paid his bill, he resolved to set off next day for Kendal, which was his original destination, and near which, he doubted not, his friends would be found. Just then the landlord entered, with information, that a sailor-looking man was inquiring for him, 'Shew him in,' said Camelford.

Lillo—for he it was—was in ecstasy to find them both alive. 'Captain,' said the honest fellow, 'God bless you, and my dear lady too! I determined to seek and find you, or die in the attempt; for, I feel, I cannot live without you. I have inquired at every town and village between here and Kendal, and should have pursued my way, even to Loch Lomond—What has detained you? why did not you write? The poor senior was miserable, for fear cash should run low, and has sent you ten guineas.'

Camelford explained every thing without reserve, and then inquired after Thompson and the rest.

'All well—never better—the cavern of Furness is the most comfortable place imaginable. Thompson would fain have come along; but I persuaded him against it, for I have a shrewd notion there is an attachment between him and Mary Mason.'

Next day the diligence conveyed them to Carlisle, and Lillo made inquiry at the Bush, for the wedding party; but they were gone. Camelford called at the bank, to know by what means the three hundred pounds could be procured from London; the banker promised to write, and undertook to procure an answer in five days. During this time they amused themselves with seeing every thing, in and about

Carlisle, worthy the attention of travellers, and likewise relieved the fears of their friends by letters, hoping to see them in a week.

The answer arrived from London, but the banker refused to deliver the money except to Charles Clement, the name by which he had requested his American friend to address him. Perplexed and puzzled, he knew not how to decide—three hundred pounds was a serious sum, and twelve months would elapse, ere he could expect another remittance.

‘Captain,’ said Lillo, ‘take my advice—go to London. Three hundred pounds is worth fetching; the journey will do you good; it will do Mrs. Camelford no harm—and, for my own part, I should like it of all things; we need not be long absent, and when you return, you can add something to the general stock—not that I am partial to this vagabond life, but, perhaps, any other would expose you to danger, and rather than harm should come to my noble captain, I would consent to remain a gipsy to my dying day.’

‘Lillo,’ replied Camelford, ‘if it were not for my Fanny’s lack of comforts, and my own intense feelings, which sometimes overpower and almost distract me, I could not only bear, but enjoy our present life. Our friends are all people of education and sound morals; harmony reigns in the society, and we have opportunities of benefiting mankind, which no other course of life could so amply afford.’

‘Yes, captain, at the expense of broken heads and bloody noses. Well, well—every man to his humour; I knew a person in Philadelphia, who preferred a deal board to a feather bed, but he never could persuade me to adopt that opinion. This sleeping in stone quarries suits you well; to be sure, it is romantic enough in summer, but when the frost sets in, I should not be surprised if we were all frozen to death.’

‘If the danger you speak of be real, how shall we account for the escape of our friends, who have encountered it two preceding winters? But what says my Fanny? Shall we explore this wonder of the world? Shall we go to London?’

‘I think ’twere best, if it can be done without endangering your personal safety. We have, one way or another, been a heavy tax upon our companions, and it would give me pleasure unspeakable, to shew them we are neither selfish nor ungrateful.’

Prior to their departure, a letter was transmitted to the cavern, stating Camelford’s reasons for so unexpected a journey, and promising to join them in as short a time as possible.

Lillo would be an outside passenger, as more suitable to his appearance. The inside contained, besides Fanny and Camelford, a rider in the button line, from Birmingham, and a clergyman. As soon as they were clear of the town, the divine addressed the button-merchant:—

‘Pray sir, how are you off for churches in Birmingham?’

‘Churches, sir!’

‘Aye—how many have you?’

‘Two.’

‘Only two!—Don’t you think they’d *stand* another?’

‘*Stand* another?—What do you mean, sir?’

‘Why, if a new church were erected in your town, don’t you think it would *tell*?—might not something handsome be *netted* by it? Do you think consecration could be obtained.’

‘I can’t say—that depends on the bishop.’

‘Aye, there it is! These bishops—these bishops’—shaking his head.

The hardwareman did not approve of a parson shaking his head at a bishop. ‘It ill becomes,’ said he, ‘one of your cloth to speak lightly of bishops.’

What should we do without them? Would you wish us in the same *savage* state as the *Americans*, who have neither *bishops* nor *lords*.'

This roused Camelford—'America, my good sir,' said he, 'is by no means in the *savage* state you seem to imagine. 'Tis true, they acknowledge no head of the church, but the Deity. Bishops may be very well in their way, but the *Americans* can do without them. Titles are not held in much estimation there either, except the title of *an honest man*. There are four lines from the inimitable pen of Dr. Goldsmith, which exactly correspond with the sentiments of these (in your opinion) *savage* people :

'Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade—  
A breath can make them, as a breath has made ;  
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,  
If once destroy'd, can never be supply'd.'

'The iron-worker, thus unexpectedly answered, leaned back, in a fit of the *dumps*. But the church building parson, who might literally be said to travel in that line, expatiated on the utility of steeples, bell-fries, green pews, and plain pews—stuffed kneeling-stools, and those made of straw—velvet pulpit cushions, and marble fonts ; in short he estimated, and clearly convinced his auditors, that a handsome church, upon his plan, could be built for the small sum of four thousand and fifty pounds nine shillings and sixpence, and then exhibited a coloured print of one, which, he said, he always placed at the head of his subscription-list.

On the third day they were set down at the Bull-and-Mouth, having dropped the manufacturers of buttons and churches on the road.

Camelford's first care was to clothe the whole party in a manner suitable to the sphere, in which they were moving. This completed, he and Lillo strolled into a coffee-house, where they were scarcely seated, when

the only person in the room, besides themselves, jumped up, and, seizing his hand, exclaimed, 'Capt. Camelford, I rejoice to see you !'

Camelford easily recognized an old friend of his father, a merchant from Philadelphia, who had always been excessively partial to him. Over a glass of wine, they talked of America—'My friend,' said Mr. Smith, 'you have nothing to fear from me; torture should not extort any thing to your disadvantage; but ours is not the country to which you can safely return yet; wait a few years—time, which brings about strange revolutions, will work one in your favour, and you will return to your native land with joy.'

'Oh, never—never!' replied Camelford; joy and I can never more associate. Joy to a murderer!—a parricide! Oh my friend! my mother's death sits heavy on my soul! Though the blow was involuntary, it softens not the anguish I shall ever feel for her untimely end !'

The merchant struck with astonishment, said, 'I beg your pardon, but really this is all new. I was not upon the spot, to be sure, when this unfortunate affair happened; but on my return, the death of Col. — was the common topic of conversation, unconnected with that of your mother. Surely you are imposed upon'—'Oh, no! this arm gave the deadly blow; she rushed between me and her vile paramour and received my sword in her bosom.'

'My dear young friend,' said Mr. Smith, 'compose yourself, and let us change the subject. I hope you are married.'—'I am and as happy in that respect as man can be. Dine with me at the Bull-and-Mouth, to-morrow; there is not a person on earth, Mrs. Camelford will more rejoice to see.'

'I shall attend to you with pleasure; in the meantime make my affectionate compliments to my lovely Fanny, as I used to call her, and tell her, I hope to see



her faced dressed in smiles, as it was wont to be, whenever Daddy Smith called at her fathers.'

This evening was devoted to Drury-lane Theatre, to which they walked, with a view of shewing Fanny the brilliancy and beauty of the shops by candle-light, which certainly to a stranger, are objects of wonder and admiration. They seated themselves in a front row of the centre box. At the extreme end of the same bench sat a well dressed young man, who stared about him with an eye of vacancy—loll'd with his legs upon the seat, and stretched and gaped as if he had not slept for the last twenty-four hours.

Unfortunately our party were without a play-bill, and wishing to know whether the performance they were come to witness, was tragic or comic, Camelford addressed his neighbour—'Pray sir, what is the play to-night?'

'The play!—Oh! aye!—the play is—'Miching Mallico'—it means mischief; but you'll know more anon—'tis a villainous business—Oh! here are the players.'

When Kemble made his appearance, struck by the dignity of his manner, Camelford again applied to his neighbour for information.

'That, sir, is—Mr. *Longpause*—as you'll see, if you can avoid sleeping. I understand Dibdin means to set music to his pauses, which will be a means of keeping the audience awake with horrid scraping.

'Oh! here comes Mrs. Siddons, another of the *Longpausers*—they are a large family. *Allegro* for me' and away he went.

An elegant dressed, beautiful woman, who sat behind them, now took possession of the vacant seat, and, at the conclusion of the act, said to Camelford,—

'You seem a stranger, sir; I was sorry to see you fall into such hands for information. The coxcomb you have been engaged with, is a contemptible ani-

mal, called, in this town, a box-lobby lounge; they set up for great critics, and supply the want of talent by quizzing, and this contemptible species of wit he has been exercising upon you.'

Every inquiry respecting the performance, was now readily and sensibly answered by the lady; and Fanny observed in a whisper, that she must certainly be a person of consequence, by the elegance of her language and the delicacy of her sentiments. At the end of the play, the lady looked at her watch, and prepared for her departure. Camelford presented his hand to lead her out, at the same time saying, 'Is it safe for a lady to leave the theatre alone? Permit me, madam, to see you to your carriage.'

'I am much obliged to you, sir; I ordered my people to be here about half past nine, but there is no depending upon servants; however, if you will have the goodness to take charge of me, and this fair lady can spare you for a few minutes, I shall be tempted to trespass upon your politeness, to see me into the next street.'

Fanny bowed a cheerful assent, and Camelford escorted the lady to her habitation, which bore a very handsome appearance; he then wished her a good night, but she insisted upon his taking one glass of wine, to their better acquaintance. This he would have declined, but the lady was peremptory; he must pledge her in one glass, to the health of his beautiful companion. To object longer, would have been a rudeness Camelford was incapable of; he therefore attended her into a handsome apartment, followed by a servant with wine, of whom she inquired if supper was ready, and was answered in the affirmative.

At her request he seated himself by her on the sofa, when, pouring out two glasses of wine, she said, 'Come, sir, here is 'Love and Opportunity,' at the

same time giving him a look, that none but such a novice as Camelford could have mistaken.

In vain she replenished the glasses; Camelford firmly refused taking any more, though assailed with all the battery of soft looks and plaintive sighs. 'Is it possible,' said she, 'you can be this abstemious creature—this Joseph, you pretend? Has the society of a woman no attractions?'

'Oh yes?—no man is more sensible of the attractions of a beautiful woman than myself. My wife, for instance—you saw her at the play—she is the delight of my heart, and, as far as I can judge, life would be insupportable without her.'

'Your wife?' said she, with a sneer—'Oh! I see you are one of the canting tribe.' Starting from his seat, he was rushing towards the door when she roared out, 'B—t your eyes! won't you pay for the wine?' at the same time ringing the bell. Struck dumb with amazement, he gazed upon her with horror. Was it possible such words could fall from the lips of a creature, fashioned by nature in her most finished mould, where elegance and delicacy appeared to strive for pre-eminence? Such were Camelford's thoughts; for words refused their utterance, which were interrupted by the waiter's demanding five shillings for the wine. Camelford, not comprehending the business, but disdaining a parley, threw down five shillings—'There's half-a-guinea for the room, your honour.'

'I'll tell you what, friend,' said Camelford, 'I shall not submit to any more extortion. I have already paid for wine, I neither desired nor drank; but, at your peril, make any demand for a room in this lady's house!'

'This lady's house!—why, you must be a pretty flat, to be *queer'd* in that manner. This is a Bagnio, you brought the Lady as you call her in, and must pay for it, must not he Miss Polly?'

He now comprehended the whole business, but determined to part with no more money; indeed he could not; for Fanny was the purse-keeper, and paying for the wine had taken his all. Unfortunately, or perhaps the reverse, it so happened however, his staunch defence, the oaken cudgel, was left in the theatre, but he was tolerably expert in the science of boxing, and determined to defend himself.

The waiter seeing the blood mount into his face, expected a storm, and rang the bell most furiously. At this moment, Camelford would have escaped, but the woman placed herself against the door, screaming and calling out murder, which brought two more waiters, one of whom made a blow at our hero, which he avoided by stooping down, and returned it with such force, that his reeling antagonist fell against the table, which upset and left them in total darkness.

In the confusion, Camelford darted down stairs, and was leaving the house, when half a dozen watchmen who had been summoned on the first alarm, secured and carried him to the round-house, followed by Miss Polly and one of the waiters.

The constable of the night began his interrogatory, in the usual way—‘Well! what have you got to say for yourself? Ah, Poll! are you there? Some row, I suppose, eh?’

The waiter then made his complaint:—‘*This here gemman* brings miss Poll to our house, orders a bottle of the best, and then refuses to pay the regular charge. Upon our civilly *argufying* the matter with him, he knocks down our Sam—breaks all the furniture and glasses, and then thinks to *sherry*. But Missis was up to his *gammon*—she was not to be *done* by a *yunker*, and so here we have him *snug*.’

‘A very black business, indeed,’ said the petty officer, ‘I thought you smarted enough last time you were before me—twenty *quid*, I’ve a notion, would

make a hole in your pocket now, and we can't let you off for less. It's *surprisable* you should not take warning—*these here* women will bring you to the gallows, one day, depend upon't—remember I tell you so. Let me see—aye! this is the fourth time you've been here.'

'Its a lie,' said Camelford, from the impulse of the moment, unable to smother his just indignation; but immediately checking himself, and ashamed of the intemperate expression he had inadvertently made use of, he continued, 'I beg your pardon, the irritability of my nature never so much got the better of my prudence; you have taxed me with crimes I never committed, and placed me on a level with characters I despise.' He then related the whole business with truth and openness, that carried conviction, and concluded with demanding his liberty.

The constable and waiter now held a whispering parley, after which the former said, 'Sir, you speak in a *surprisable* manner, and like an honest man. As to this here woman, she's *not* of no consequence, she's one of our *terrible Mary's* and generally comes here once or twice a week; but I'll not be *queer'd* by her this bout. I mistook you for one of these here box loungers, and its quite *unpossible* to be up to their *rigs*. So Sir, as I've another set waiting, and as its my *dooty* to *derange* all disputes, give my clerk five *hog*, and the waiter a *quid*, and you are at liberty.'

'I must candidly acknowledge my ignorance,' replied Camelford, 'your speech is not exactly what I understand; but as most likely it relates to money, I honestly own I have none; but if the waiter will accompany me to the Bull-and-Mouth, he shall cheerfully be paid what you award; but first have the goodness to explain the hog and quid, I should, from my own circumscribed knowledge, conceive they related to pigs and tobacco.'

Here was a general laugh, accompanied with a look of contempt at his ignorance. 'Where was you born, master?' said the constable:—'Not within the sound of Bow Bells, I'll be sworn,' replied the waiter; why, Sir, a hog's a shilling, and a quid is one pound one.'

'Very well,' said Camelford, 'go with me, and you shall have the money; for I find I have innocently borne the appearance of blame, through my ignorance of the town, and 'tis fit I should pay for my learning.'

Fanny and Lillo's fears for his safety could only be equalled by their joy at his return. During supper he related minutely the occurrences of the evening, which filled his wife with wonder and disgust. Could such things be? A veracity less undoubted than her Camelford's could not have convinced her, that their elegant companion in the box, and the abandoned inmate of a bagnio, could be one and the same person. To complete the adventure, his pocket-book was missing; but the contents were of no value, or even consequence, except the address of the young man, from whom he obtained the £.10 at Carlisle; this loss gave him serious concern, his integrity was pledged, and he could now perhaps never redeem it. The evening, or rather the hour before bed, was occupied in melancholy reflections on human depravity, and ended with a determination to join their friends in the north as speedily as possible.

Camelford went into Lombard-street next morning. The banker acknowledged the receipt of £.300 for the use of Charles Clement, but could not with safety pay it till his person was identified. He returned to his inn, spiritless and dejected, till Lillo reminded him of his friend the American merchant, who was to dine with him, and whose testimony would be sufficient proof of his reality. Mr. Smith

came to his appointment, and readily undertook to vouch for his friend, whom he would attend the next day, accompanied by a respectable London merchant of his acquaintance.

Fanny was then introduced, and recognized with smiles of pleasure by her valued friend, who, after dinner, presented her with a valuable watch, as a token of his almost paternal regard.

At five o'clock Mr. Smith had an appointment, to which he pressed Camelford and Lillo to attend him, promising to introduce them to a very pleasant party, and assuring Fanny he would restore them safe in a couple of hours. On their return without Mr. Smith, they found Fanny seated at tea with a well dressed young man, whom she introduced as a gentleman who had rendered her a singular mark of attention.

To amuse herself during their absence, she strolled into a bookseller's shop, with a view to purchase one of the monthly publications; and expressing her fears of not finding her road back, this gentleman had politely offered himself as her escort, and had added to the obligation, by sitting down to tea.

Camelford thanked him, and begged he would prolong his visit, it would be charity, they were strangers; and conversation with a person of his knowledge of the town, would be both pleasant and profitable.

In the course of the evening, Fanny winding up her watch broke the spring, which the stranger very politely offered to repair, as he was he said, a watch-maker of the first repute in town, his name Sharp, and his shop in Cornhill, where he should be happy to see them. Camelford, unsuspecting of fraud, and pleased with his manners, relinquished the watch, and beheld it for the last time: it was in the hands of a swindler, and thus he bought his second day's

experience. The next he hoped would terminate their stay in this deceptive town, where iniquity stalked abroad, and vice reared her destructive head.

According to appointment, he went to Lombard-street next morning, attended by the two merchants; and as he was receiving his money, an officer, who happened to be in the bank, eyed him with more than common attention, and on his return to Bull-and-Mouth-street, seemed to be dodging him. The circumstance was of itself unpleasant, and coupled with his fears of detection, caused unusual emotion; at all events, London was no place of safety, either to their persons or property, and next morning was fixed for their departure.

The cloth was drawn, and they had just toasted their friends in the north, when three men burst into the room, and inquired 'which was Charles Camelford?'

'I am the man.'

'Then I have a warrant to apprehend you, on a charge of murder committed in America.'

Camelford, with a look of anguish at his Fanny, who leaned nearly in a state of insensibility upon Lillo, surrendered himself; and giving his pocket book to his wife, was led away by the retainers of justice, and lodged in Newgate.

Upon giving the gaoler a guinea, he was accommodated with a decent apartment, and treated with humanity. The informant he was told was an officer named Travis, who had been in America all the war, and returned at its conclusion. Inquiring if he might see his friends? he was answered in the affirmative, and indulged with pen and ink, when he immediately wrote a consolatory letter to Fanny, and a note to Lillo, requesting to see him as soon as possible.

He had scarcely breakfasted next morning, when



an elderly lady requested to see him. Unknown to any female in London, except his wife, he fancied there must be some mistake; there could however be no harm in seeing the person and she was desired to walk in.

Preceded by the keeper, entered a well dressed woman of the middle age, but evidently lame; she hobbled up to Camelford by the help of her stick, threw her arms round his neck, and whispered—‘Lillo,’ Then in a loud voice said, ‘my dear nephew! have I found you at last? since my arrival in England, I have been constant in my inquiries, and now alas! to find you in this wretched place! your poor uncle will break his heart!’ Then putting a guinea into the attendant’s hand, she continued, ‘for heaven’s sake treat him well.’ Camelford played his part, by inquiries after his uncle and cousins, and how long she had left America?

The keeper was now summoned to another part of the prison, and gratified by the old lady’s guinea, made no scruple of leaving them together. The moment he had turned the key, Lillo threw off his cloak, gown, petticoat and bonnet, during which, he informed Camelford of his plan, and in five minutes, they had completely changed characters; and Camelford was practising his aunt’s hobbling gait when the gaoler returned, and told the lady the coachman could wait no longer, having another fare to attend. They parted in apparent grief and the promise of another visit on the morrow.

Camelford told the coachman to drive to St. Paul’s Church-yard; and threw himself on the seat deeply penetrated with gratitude, though not entirely divested of fears for Lillo’s safety. But when he explained his wonderful escape to Fanny, she blessed the faithful creature, the true friend, the preserver of herself and her Camelford.

A longer stay at this inn would have been every way dangerous, he therefore paid their bill, and called a coach which was ordered to Cheapside; this he discharged, and took another to Lad Lane, where Mr. Smith resided. Leaving Fanny and their packages at the Swan, his next care was to look after Lillo. Accordingly disguised in the sailor's habit, he retraced his way to Newgate, and stationed himself where he could see every person who either went in, or came out.

Lillo overjoyed at his friend's release, thought not of the consequences to himself; he knew they could not be dangerous though they might be unpleasant. When his attendant brought dinner, he was muffled up in his handkerchief, pretending to have the tooth-ache, and very seriously consulted him upon the means likely to give ease, without extraction, which he had a decided objection to.

Camelford waited at his post, till nearly dark, he then returned to Lad Lane, determined to consult his American friend on the means to be employed for Lillo's emancipation. Inquiring for Mr. Smith, he was shewn to his apartment, and in few words gave him to understand the predicament in which he stood. Mr. Smith laughed heartily at Lillo's ingenuity, and congratulated Camelford on his wonderful escape; 'all we have to do I conceive,' said he, 'is to put a good face on the matter, demand his release, and threaten them with damages for false imprisonment. Do you know the name of the informant?'

'Travis—Lieut. Travis.'

'The luckiest thing in the world, he came over in my ship, I shall find little difficulty in tracing him, and then trust to me for your friend's liberation. But,' continued he 'you must not remain here another hour; all the principal inns will be watched; but I know a clean comfortable house in Holborn,

where you will be perfectly safe, and where I hope to conduct your preserver to-morrow, before the fashionable world have finished their breakfasts.' Mr. Smith ordered a coach, and seeing them comfortably accommodated in Holborn, proceeded to a house much frequented by military gentlemen, particularly those who had lately crossed the Atlantic. On inquiring if Lieut. Travis was there? the waiter answered yes! and was ordered to call him out. Shewn into a private room, Mr. Smith used very little ceremony in pointing out the meanness, the infamy of Travis's conduct; 'a British officer degraded to the rank of an informer! were I your master sir, I would cashier you, were I your messmate, I would shun you. Nay sir, put on no fierce looks to me, or I go to the next apartment, and expose the whole of this infamous business. The person whom you wish to prosecute is my particular friend, a man of honour, and every way superior to him, who for the sake of the reward, would take away his life. But sir, my friend is, thank heaven! not at your mercy, your associates have seized the wrong person, and very heavy damages are the consequences of false imprisonment. I shall expect you to meet me to-morrow morning at Newgate, by ten o'clock, and there substantiate your charge against Mr. Lillo, who is the person now ignominiously confined, or beg his pardon, own your error, and instantly take the proper and speedy means to liberate him.' Alarm and fear succeeded passion in the mind of Travis; though he was in every sense of the word, an informer, he felt no honour in the appellation, and dreaded an exposure to his companions of the mess, who would to a man have hooted him from their society. The next day he was true to his appointment. 'Is this the person Lieut. Travis, against whom you laid the information?'

‘No sir! that gentleman is a stranger to me.’

Lillo threw aside his handkerchief, and supported by the presence of Smith, harrangued on the injury he had suffered—‘Were the person and character of an innocent man to be at the mercy of every wretch, who for a bribe, would descend to the employment of a spy—a tool—an informer?’

The jailor, who now clearly saw the trick that had been played, thought it most prudent to keep his own counsel, and thereby secure himself from blame, on a charge of neglect, or perhaps, collusion.

The governor was sent for, and Lillo’s release demanded, but could not be granted without certain forms. Lieut. Travis must go before a magistrate, and make an oath, who would then write an order for the gentleman’s enlargement.

This was soon accomplished; the expenses and fees fell upon this honourable military hero, who submitted to whatever was demanded, to save himself from the disgrace of a prosecution.

The meeting of the friends may be easily imagined; but Mr. Smith would not suffer them to waste much time in words, for in less than an hour he gave them his blessing, and saw them off in a chaise for Barnet.

Whilst they are on their journey, it may not be amiss to look after the “Gipseys of the North,” who passed their time in the usual way. They were the poor’s friends on all occasions; injuries were redressed without respect to persons, yet no one ever suspected the place of their abode.

To counteract the tediousness of the long evenings which now rapidly approached, a chess-board was provided, at which Thompson and the parson were adepts; together with books on a variety of useful subjects, which the senior read aloud, whilst the females employed themselves in knitting—an art they

had learnt in Scotland, and which proved of the utmost service to the poor for miles round their abode, who in return, sold them eggs, cheese, bread, butter and milk, of the best quality.

About six miles north of Furness Abbey, on the borders of a hanging wood, which skirted and nearly reached the summit of a lofty mountain, some distance from any habitation, lived a melancholy being, in the common acceptance of the word; but his own individual ideas were apparently, the source of happiness. He had been an idiot from his birth; but general humanity, and a peculiar fondness for the brute creation, were the governing principles of a mind divested of reasoning faculties. The unfeeling treatment of parish officers had driven this imbecile being to seek a situation remote from the haunts of men. He built himself a clay hut, and surrounded it with a wall of the same materials. His family consisted of a sheep-cur, who was his constant companion at bed and board, and about fifty domestic animals of the bird tribe, namely, cocks and hens, which were all perfectly white. These he never destroyed, but supported himself by selling their eggs and living on the produce, assisted by the contributions of strangers, who visited Jemmy's hut, as an object of curiosity.

For fifteen years he had resided on this spot, an isolated, harmless being, usually known by the appellation of 'Jemmy of the Wood.' The robins built in clusters round his hut, and the hedge-sparrow found an hospitable asylum. The few crumbs that fell from his table were scattered in his court, and a wish to preserve life, rather than destroy it, was the governing principle of Jemmy of the Wood. He was the friend of the brute tribe—and as for the human, they came not near him. His beard he kept down, by rubbing a rough stone over his chin every

morning—a method now become fashionable, under letters patent.

One day as he was seated on a verdant mount, surrounded by his family, the cry of hounds assailed his ears. A timid hare came slowly up the hill, for her strength was nearly exhausted, followed by three or four dogs at no great distance. Approaching the place where Jemmy stood, she uttered a cry, responsive to his feelings, and lay down at his feet. The poor fellow though bereft of reason, had more than his portion of tenderness; he took up the little frightened creature, placed it in his bosom, and said, 'Jemmy of the Wood will save thee.'

Just then the 'squire and owner of the pack, rode up, inquiring for the hare. 'She's here,' said Jemmy, 'and her heart beats so fast'—The sportsmen, perceiving the idiot's humanity had checked their chace, assailed him with oaths, and an application of the horse-whip. Jemmy, terrified at these monsters' rage, gently laid down the hare; but she could yield no more diversion—her heart, alas, was burst!

A short time after this, some pheasants were turned into the wood by order of the 'squire to breed; but not, perhaps, liking the soil or situation, they rambled away—not a bird remained, and the blame rested on Jemmy and his dog. The circumstance of the hare had kindled a spark in the 'squire's mind, which the loss of the pheasants had blown into a blaze. His gamekeeper had orders to shoot the dog, and two labourers were sent to pull down his hut. Poor Jemmy was innocently seated at the door, feeding and caressing his dependant brutes; when the report of a gun, close to his ear, and the cries of faithful Trim, aroused the small spark of reason he possessed; he started up, looked round in alarm, and then, with an idiotic smile of sorrow, plaintively exclaimed, 'Oh dear, you have killed poor Trim!'

‘Aye,’ cried the inhuman keeper, ‘it is his honour’s order; your pig-stie must come down too, and you may think yourself well off, that you are not sent to prison, or on board a man of war; such idle rascals as you ought not to be tolerated in a christian country — Why don’t you begin?’ The labourers reluctantly came forward; poor Jemmy silently drove his fowls into the word, and bore Trim under his arm.

In half an hour the clay-built cot was level with the ground, and the gamekeeper retired, threatening transportation, if Jemmy dared again intrude upon his master’s domain.

The poor fellow had rambled to another extremity of the wood, and seated under an oak, was talking to his feathered friends about their murdered companion. The senior and Thompson sat on the opposite hill, whither they had walked that morning, to take a sketch of this beautiful and romantic wood. The sight of a man of such appearance, and so surrounded, in a place six miles from any habitation, was a matter of wonder and astonishment, the latter was very predominant, and induced them to cross the valley. They soon reached the brow, and beheld an object worthy the pencil of a Louthembourg, and the commiseration of a Howard.

Seated on a cop, under the shade of a beautiful oak, sat a figure the most forlorn; in years he appeared about forty, of low stature, with an aspect pale and meagre; his clothing was the poorest that could be imagined, and on his countenance sat sorrow inexpressible, mixt with a vacant stare, that said, ‘All is not right within.’ On his left lay the remains of poor Trim, which his hand gently pressed; whilst one of his fowls, seemingly of great age, perched on his knee. The senior thought he perceived a tear stray down his cheek, whilst he stroked the head of his favourite chanticleer, and in pitiable accents, said,

‘Trim can’t bark any more! Poor Jemmy’s bow-wow has good teeth, but he bit not the ’squire.’

Just then espying the senior and Thompson, he ran towards them, with his hat in his hand—‘If you come to buy eggs, Jemmy has none—they broke them all! The ’squire does not love eggs; but if you’ll stay a day or two, my whiteys will lay more.’ He then called them by their names and they approached, permitting him to handle them in the most familiar manner. ‘But here’s old Peter,’ said he, taking up the bird, ‘he has crowed for Jemmy ten summers; you shall hear him.’ Then putting him down and patting his back, continued, ‘Poor P! crow for Jemmy.’ The bird immediately flapped his wings, and made the valley resound with his shrill tones.

‘What a lesson is here Thompson, to the unfeeling mind!’ exclaimed the senior; ‘the humanity of this poor idiot puts sanity to the blush.’

Jemmy had seated himself again by the side of his faithful cur, on whom he fixed a look of sorrow. The senior addressed him, ‘Where do you live, Jemmy?’

‘I don’t know—they’ve pulled down Jemmy’s house—the ’squire says I must go away. Come, and I’ll shew you what they’ve done.’ Then taking the dog under his arm, he led the way into the wood, followed by his feathered companions. They soon reached the place of his former residence; but all was laid waste—scarcely a vestige remained. ‘Who,’ said Thompson, ‘could be so inhuman?’

‘The ’squire does not love my whiteys,’ replied Jemmy, ‘and Trim barked at the keeper.’

They soon discovered that a cruel act of oppression had been practised on this poor, unoffending creature, and determined not to return without being of some use; they therefore fell to work, and



patched up a little hovel, to serve him for the night, fully resolved to build him a house on a spot where his oppressor had no power.

‘Here’s four eggs my whiteys have just laid in yonder bush—you won’t hurt poor Trim, will you?’

Jemmy spoke the last words with so much feeling, and such a tender look, whilst he smoothed the forehead of his deceased favourite, that Thompson turned away, unable to conceal his emotion. In vain they endeavoured to persuade him to bury his dog.—‘What,’ said he, ‘lay him in the ground!—No, no! poor Trim is cold enough already!—Jemmy will keep him warm in his bosom!’

Finding it impossible to separate the forlorn being from his once-faithful companion, they separated, Jemmy carrying the breathless object of his attention, and followed by his feathered retinue, accompanying them to the edge of the wood. For miles they could look back, but Jemmy was still there.—‘Surely,’ said the senior, lifting up his eyes to heaven, ‘the Great Author of the Universe will not look with impunity on deeds like this! I do not wish for power, except where instances occur, as in the present case; but surely, the injuries of this poor creature call loudly for redress!’

‘And he shall have it,’ replied Thompson; ‘our power though limited, is still able I trust, to avenge his cause; but first, we must place him beyond the jurisdiction of his bloated, purse-proud enemy, and that I hope, to-morrow will effect.’

On the morrow the friends set off on the amiable errand of benevolence, dressed in the gipsy costume. On their way they called at a small farmer’s, who usually supplied them with eggs, &c. and borrowed working implements. The honest man also sent his two labourers along with them; for Jemmy of the Wood was known to him, and he had a feeling

heart. When they had nearly ascended the hill on the borders of the wood, they looked around for Jemmy, but he was not there; they called, but no one answered; they explored the thickest part of a neighbouring coppice, and beheld him seated by a spring; Trim laying across his knee, and his poultry drinking the pure element with much seeming thirst. He started at the sight of his fellow-beings, from whom alone he apprehended mischief, and taking the dog in his arms, was going to fly; but, seeing the senior, stopped and addressed him, 'Oh! is it you? I thought the 'squire had sent for Trim; but he should not have had him! I've brought my whiteys to drink—I forgot them yesterday.'

'Jemmy,' said the senior, 'thou shalt live on the moor beyond the wood; there the 'squire has no power, and we will build thee a house.'

'Will you, indeed? and will you let my whiteys perch within, and make a bed for Trim? He wants a place to lie on, for he can't run any more.'

The peasants led the way over the top of the hill to a plain beneath, which, for want of shelter was both bleak and cold; to remedy this they planned a fire place, a convenience his last habitation could not boast. All hands went to work except Jemmy, whom they left in the wood making a grave for his lost companion, which the senior had with difficulty prevailed upon him to bury, under a promise of buying all his eggs for two months to come. They cut up sods, which formed substantial walls, and by the evening raised it six feet high. Wood was necessary to support the roof, which they hoped to complete the day following; and returning through the wood, found Jemmy seated by the grave, over which he had fantastically placed sticks in a circular form, interwoven with white feathers. Jemmy had now twenty eggs, for which the senior gave him half a crown. 'You'll want two shilling in change,' said he, 'and

I have no money.' 'Oh! never mind,' said the senior, 'I give you that as earnest of our bargain.' They likewise left him plenty of bread and cheese, and gladness once more cheered his heart.

In the morning they returned with boughs, and had nearly completed the roof, when they heard a whistle, and several dogs of the pointer and spaniel breed appeared upon the heath.

The gamekeeper, mounted on a prancing horse, came galloping up, and seeing the new erection, asked 'who had given them liberty to build there?'

Thomson, whose blood fermented with anger, as he recognized him for Jemmy's persecutor, replied with more passion than prudence, 'What is that to you?'

'I'll soon let you know that, you gipsy devil,' replied he, dismounting, and tying his horse to a gorse bush. The lawyer, who felt as much as Thompson, but possessed superior prudence, perceived, from the keeper's appearance, that his friend, who was a diminutive man was no match for him. He therefore came forward, and putting Thompson aside, thus addressed this merciless implement of power. 'To challenge a man so much beneath you in point of strength, is the action of a coward, I shall therefore take his place; and that you may not have to alledge as an excuse, that I have given you no cause of offence, I now tell you, that if you are the man who shot poor Jemmy's dog, and were the instrument of pulling down his house, you are a greater brute than the horse you ride, and the pillory would be a gentle punishment for such a wretch.'

The lawyer was a stout man, of most determined courage: This speech staggered the keeper, who after pausing awhile, untied his horse, mounted, and rode away.

The roof was soon finished, and they had about

half surrounded the building with a wall, in compliance with Jemmy's earnest desire, when they discovered a crowd advancing on foot, in the centre of which rode the keeper.

The labour ceased and a consultation was held. That their approach indicated evil there was not the smallest doubt; that the keeper, baffled in his intent to 'bully, had rode away for a reinforcement, was readily conjectured, and so it proved. This mighty man advanced, with triumph in his look, exclaiming, 'I deserve to be pilloried, do I!—we shall see who deserves it most, you or I!—Constables do your duty.'

The principal officer, for there were eight, without attempting any violence, expostulated on the folly of resistance, at the same time observing, 'that if there was no crime there would be no punishment; whatever the keeper had against them he must substantiate when they arrived at Ulverstone; in the mean time, he would protect them from injury, although a great concourse of the lower classes were assembled, in consequence of the game-keepers report.'

'Constables,' replied the senior, 'we have rendered a friendly action to an oppressed fellow creature; is the world so depraved that an act of humanity is cognizable by law?'

'God forbid,' rejoined the constable, 'the information is on the vagrant act, as gipseys, rogues, and vagabonds.'

'Whatever is the charge, we shall not oppose the laws of our country, but cheerfully attend you; unconscious of wrong, we fear no investigation.'

Leaving the working tools in possession of the farmer's labourers, they proceeded across the plain, the constables filled with astonishment at the language and deportment of the senior, so unlike any thing they had expected from the charge exhibited against

them. The former spokesman then said, 'you have nothing to fear on the score of prejudice or ignorance, the justice is a worthy man.' 'Aye,' said another, 'the rector is the poor man's friend.'

The game-keeper rode on before them, and at the end of the town had assembled a large mob of men, women and children, to whom he related 'what a wonderful escape he had had from a lawless gang of gipseys on the heath.'

The minds of these ignorant people were so influenced by this crafty dissembler, that a volley of mud and stones welcomed our friends' arrival at Ulverstone, accompanied by the huzzas of ignorance and brutality. As they turned towards the market hall, a fresh party of butchers, blacksmiths, and women, joined the former mob, and hearing they were gipseys, exclaimed against them, as rogues and pick-pockets. The constables found it impossible to keep the peace, and were on the point of retiring to save themselves, when the attention of all parties was arrested by the discharge of a pistol, from the hand of a gentleman dressed in black, who had mounted a horse-block, to render himself conspicuous, and waving his hat to demand silence, spoke as follows :

'Fellow countrymen—fellow creatures—fellow Christians, listen to me. If you love your liberties, your wives, your families; if you love your country, and respect its laws, listen to me, I say. I am prejudiced in favour of no one. I respect the good of all descriptions, whether they are rich or poor; more particularly, my friends, I feel myself attached to the latter, because when oppression stalks abroad, they need an advocate, to counterbalance want of money; a want that almost amounts to a crime, and in some cases subjects the injured party to punishment. On this principle, with all the powers of my body and mind, will I stand up for the poor.' Here he was in-

interrupted by loud huzzas, and ‘hear him, hear him,’ was repeated through the mob.

‘I am a stranger here, and equally so to the cause of this tumult. I see persons in custody, but I know not their crime; do you?—I see by your looks you do not! From what cause then are they thus maltreated? Is it from being meanly habited and poor? or is it sufficient for you, that the mongrel hireling of a purse-proud tyrant tells you they are vagabonds, that you take the law into your own hands, and punish them ere they are found guilty? Allow them the same privilege you would wish yourselves in a similar situation. I love my country, and I respect its laws; do not you the same? I am sure you do. Let us not then act contrary to those laws, but let the officers of justice proceed in their duty, and leave their case to the decision of your worthy magistrate. What, let me ask you, will become of the interests of the poor, against the proud oppressor, if they support not one another? When it was asked in holy writ, ‘who is your neighbour?’ it was justly answered, ‘not he alone who lives beside you—not he who is your relative—but he who stands in need of your assistance.’ Do these strangers come under that denomination? are they oppressed, and do they need your support? the answer is obvious; you have oppressed them, shew your contrition; give them your support, till you are assured they are unworthy of it; and, as the good Samaritan gave relief to the friendless stranger, go you and do likewise.’

General and loud approbation followed this speech; but not satisfied with shouts that rent the air, they rushed in a body, seized the orator, and carried him in triumph to the hall of justice, followed by the prisoners. But guess the astonishment, the joy of the latter, when in their advocate and able defender

they beheld Camelford!!! their loved, long wished for Camelford!!!

Upon the bench sat a man of mild and venerable aspect, beloved by all ranks equally for his piety and justice ; he was the father of his flock, and the universal friend of mankind. At his left hand, by way of contrast, sat the 'squire, hard and unfeeling in principle, cruel and litigious in practice. On a seat beneath appeared the magistrate's clerk, well versed in law, a ready penman, and by him, in familiar converse, sat Lillo.

'The Justice's clerk first examined the Keeper.

*Ques.* 'Pray what is your name and occupation?'

*Ans.* 'My name is Matthew Marksman, and I am gamekeeper to F. H. Esq.'

*Ques.* 'Marksman! a very good name indeed! and pray Mr. Marksman, what do you know of the culprits now in court?'

*Ans.* 'Why sir, as I was hunting his honour's dogs over the heath, about six miles off, I saw a number of ill looking fellows patching up a house, and on a nearer view found they were gipseys. Naturally supposing this was meant as a receptacle for stolen goods, I coolly asked what they were doing, and who had given them leave? On which, one of them answered in the most impudent manner, what is that to you? I then jumped off my horse, determined, as I thought it my duty, to examine the place; when another sturdy fellow came up and without the least provocation, told me I ought to be put in the pillory. Finding myself a single man amidst such a lawless rabble, I did not think even my life safe, so rode off for the constables, and have brought them before your worship as rogues and vagabonds.'

*Ques.* 'Upon my word Mr. Marksman you have acted a very patriotic part, and deserve well of your

country. You did not give these people any provocation you say at that time or previous ?

*Ans.* 'Not the least, I was civil and well behaved.'

*Ques.* 'That is an answer to the precise point of time, but not previous; had you never interfered with, or provoked them before ?'

*Ans.* 'Never. This was our first meeting. I had heard indeed, that gipseys were in the neighbourhood, committing their usual depredations, but had not supposed it possible they would openly build a house to receive their plunder ?'

*Ques.* 'And you know this to have been the design of the building ?'

*Ans.* 'Certainly! what other purpose could it answer ?'

*Ques.* 'Very well observed. Pray with what intent did you go into that part of the country, when you made this wonderful discovery ?'

*Ans.* 'I went to hunt my master's dogs.'

*Ques.* 'You went to hunt your master's dogs! You went to hunt the gipseys too, it seems, but here I think you got upon a wrong scent. Did this nefarious gang of freebooters never tax you with cruelty towards a poor idiot, towards Jemmy of the Wood ?'

At this question, the 'squire rose from his seat, sat down again, bit his nails, coughed and shewed evident marks of uneasiness.

The Justice now spoke.

'Clerk, further interrogatories are useless. I grieve for the sake of humanity and the credit of the country that this disgraceful business has been brought before me. We are better informed perhaps than Mr. H. or his gamekeeper imagine. We know the whole scene of iniquity practised against a poor pitiable inoffensive fellow creature; and have granted permission for these men who seem to have imbibed the milk of human kindness to erect the suspicious building on our own domain.'

'You, Matthew Markman, will pay two guineas



into the court for the use of these honest men, as some remuneration for their lost time.' This the senior received, and appropriated to some necessary comforts for poor Jemmy. Camelford and Lille, though they eagerly longed to embrace their friends, kept aloof for obvious reasons, after informing the senior they should be at the cave in the evening.

The 'squire had left the hall in a violent rage, at the conclusion of the recitor's speech, and was haranguing some of his attendants in the market place, and threatening vengeance, when Camelford passing by caught his attention. He rolled up to him with folded arms; 'and who are you Mr. Orator,' said he, 'who can expatiate so feelingly on my conduct? It is well for you I could not get near enough, or I should have made you feel the weight of my whip, and brought you down from the exalted situation you had chosen.'

Camelford affected astonishment, and starting back a few paces exclaimed, 'who are you that dare insult a stranger? I know you not, nor do I suffer such language with impunity.'

'I'll tell you who I am—I am lord of the manor where that wretched fool lived.'

'You may be lord of *manors* at a distance—you have none at hand, I am sure, except those of a blackguard.'

A mob had now collected; the word blackguard irritated the 'squire beyond all bounds, and he made a motion to kick Camelford, who catching his upraised leg threw him with some force upon his back. Though sorely bruised, he did not long lie prostrate, but jumping up, took off his coat and stood in a posture of defiance. Camelford looked down upon him with a smile of contempt, and buttoned his coat tight around him. A ring was formed, rancour and passion deformed the countenance of the 'squire, coolness and intrepidity marked that of Camelford, who

acted upon the defensive, till seeing a blow aimed with more than common force, he warded it off, and with his open hand, gave his opponent a slap on the cheek, which sent him reeling several yards, and made the market place resound ; at the same time admonishing him to desist, or he might repent the consequences. This friendly caution was only fresh matter of irritation ; he returned to the attack with redoubled rage, made a feint with one hand, and with the other lent Camelford a blow on the breast, which would have brought an ordinary being to the ground ; but unmoved either in body or mind, and finding the 'squire determined to provoke his fate, he ran in, and breaking down every guard, struck him under the short ribs, and laid him a second time prostrate. The surrounding spectators inwardly rejoiced at the tyrant's fall ; not one moved to raise him but the gamekeeper ; whilst he was recovering his wind, Camelford again addressed him ; ' you may plainly see and feel too I think, the power I possess ; I have, till provoked, avoided doing you an injury, but cannot answer for myself much longer, either desist, or take what follows.'

The 'squire had in some measure recovered his wind, and ere his opponent had well finished his warning speech, made a blow which Camelford avoided by stooping, and was in the act of returning it, when the game-keeper, putting out his leg, tripped up his heels. This caused a general murmur, and the word shame ! was repeated from various quarters.

But this accident dismayed not Camelford, he recovered his legs in an instant ; fully bent on bringing this business to an issue, he closed with his antagonist, and making use of an art he had learnt in his youth, placed his hands in a certain situation, gave the 'squire a complete somerset, and sent him with such force over a fish woman's stall, that he lay without sensation ; then turning to the keeper, with one

blow sent him staggering to the left, and before he could recover himself, another on the right hand laid him prostrate; whilst Camelford stood over him, and with more than usual vehemence exclaimed, '*Remember Jemmy of the Wood.*'

The mob cheered our hero with loud and rapturous shouts, and would again have carried him off in triumph, but he declined in a peremptory, though civil tone, such a mark of their approbation, though they followed his footsteps till he took refuge at the inn, and joined his Fanny and Lillo.

In the evening, leaving their trunks at the inn, our friends set forward on foot to Furness Abbey, beguiling the way with cheerful remarks, and anticipations of future comfort. The first view of the ruin filled Camelford and Fanny with wonder, mixed in the former with a gloomy kind of delight! The wide uninhabited valley, the stupendous grandeur of the abbey, whose towers and antique spires gave notes of former fame and splendour—where the holies of the land bestowed absolution, bought with worldly pelf, or denounced anathemas on all of different creeds—where laymen bowed the knee, and obeyed the imperious mandate of lazy, slothful drones, whose pride and power kept ignorance in awe, and even appalled the learned and the great. This sacred fane, once the habitation of bloated pride and rank hypocrisy, was now the hospitable shelter of owls and bats, accompanied by the jackdaw, who, amidst the umbrageous foliage of the ivy, laid her eggs, nor feared the rude despoiler.

The twilight was fast advancing, a white owl skimmed around the building, and with her hootings welcomed their approach.

Lillo gave a shrill whistle, the usual signal, and, in a moment the senior appeared before them—affection and feeling stopped their utterance—without

speaking a word, he took Fanny by the hand, cordially pressed it, and leading her forward, they found themselves in the cavern, surrounded by the whole party. Joy and congratulation here took place; they hailed the travellers with sincerity and delight. Thompson could not contain his transport within the bounds of moderation; his friendship for Camelford was tinged with enthusiasm, and called forth at this moment, emotions the most fervid. The rest of the party received him with unfeigned satisfaction, and Camelford assured them in return, that this was one of the happiest moments of his life; he then related every circumstance that had occurred since their separation, to their arrival at Kendal; from whence continued he, 'we posted to Ulverstone, and arrived at the critical moment of your appearance in the market-place.' They in return, were equally communicative, particularly dwelling upon their acquaintance with Jemmy of the Wood, and the turpitude of 'squire H. and his gamekeeper, the leading facts of which Camelford had learnt at Ulverstone.

Having cut the bread of peace, and drank the cup of fellowship, Camelford produced his pocket-book, and giving the senior two hundred and fifty pounds, desired it might be placed to the general stock. In the morning he was anxious to witness the completion of poor Jemmy's abode; for which purpose all the males set forward, each carrying something to add to his comforts. On their arrival at the new-built hut, where they naturally expected to find Jemmy and his family, there was no visible trace of a living creature having been there. To the temporary hovel in the wood they next repaired; but Jemmy was not there; in vain they called—no responsive note of recognition reached their ears. The senior, who had witnessed with friendly sympathy, the af-

fection this outcast had shewn for his dog, walked towards the place of his interment, which the cackling of his poultry soon pointed out, and Camelford's warm heart throbbed with pleasure, at the thoughts of seeing and serving so oppressed and neglected a fellow creature.

When they arrived within a few paces, they perceived the fowls were gathered round Trim's grave, and thought the noise they at present made, differed materially from the usual mode adopted by their species. As our party approached, the feathered tribe gave way, when they first discovered poor Jemmy stretched at length upon the grave of his favourite. The senior called, but he moved not; he took his hand, but alas! it was cold as clay. Jemmy had breathed his last!

Ye merciless minions of the unfeeling great!—edged tools in the hands of madmen!—learn from nature in its half finished state; a lesson of feeling and humanity!

A scene so unexpected and truly affecting, sunk deep into the minds of all present. Camelford turned aside to conceal his emotions—Thompson sobbed out, 'Good God!' and the senior lifting up his hands and eyes to heaven, uttered an inward groan, which spoke more than words could express.

After a little consultation, it was agreed to bury him immediately, with his faithful dog, in the very spot where lately stood his mud-built hut. This was soon accomplished, and the senior carved, upon the bark of an overhanging tree, the following couplet:

"Beneath this turf, where once their hovel stood,  
"Lie faithful Trim, and Jemmy of the Wood."

The poultry were next to be disposed of. After feeding them with the bread intended for their un-

fortunate master, they were easily caught, and conveyed to the farmer who had supplied men and tools to build the cottage on the plain, except old Peter, *Jemmy's* favourite; this the senior carried to the cave, as a pet for its female inhabitants. When *Fanny* heard the fatal conclusion of *Jemmy's* calamitous existence, she took the bird on her knee, and sprinkled his feathers with the tear of sensibility.

For some years nothing of moment occurred, though we could spin out the history to volumes, were we to record all their acts of courage and philanthropy. The interests of *self* were totally set aside, when the poor, the oppressed, or the injured, came in contact. Fatigue or suffering were amply repaid, if one heart was relieved from woe, or one creature preserved in the great scale of existence. By their various disguises, they were enabled to effect by *finesse*, what otherwise would have been impracticable; but this, as always tending to good, was perfectly honourable, and every way justifiable. They travelled their usual circuit, and made frequent excursions of forty or fifty miles, in every direction. Our Americans made themselves completely acquainted with the history, politics, laws, arts, and manufactures, of this country; they studied agriculture and botany with success, and had an extensive collection of drawings, which embraced all the grand and sublime scenery, in which the North of England and Scotland abound. Their employments were useful to themselves, and beneficial to society at large. Exercise, health, and cheerfulness stamped their progress, unwearied in well-doing, and years passed on, unmarked by lassitude.

In the autumn of 1782, they took possession, for the last time, of the cavern at Furness Abbey. One day, as *Camelford*, *Thompson*, and *Lillo*, were perambulating the mountains, a strayed pointer dog, who

seemingly, had lost his master, came towards them, lay down at their feet, and wagged his tail; Camelford examined the collar, and a flush of joy crimsoned his face as he read, '*S. W. Romney, Newby Bridge.*'

'My dear friends,' said he, 'congratulate me; this dog I hope and believe, belongs to the very man who assisted me in my necessities at Carlisle, and the loss of whose address I have never ceased to regret. He bore the same name, though, as I recollect, his then residence was somewhere in Yorkshire. Tomorrow I will be certified of the fact, and, if it prove so, will repay the money, with thanks and interest. At present we will take the dog to our cave, and he shall be my first introduction to Mr. Romney.'

The next day Camelford supplied himself with the needful, and accompanied by Lillo and the pointer, arrived at Newby Bridge. There was no occasion to inquire the residence of Romney; his dog 'marshalled them the way;' but, first, it was thought necessary to make inquiry, for which purpose they stopped at a public house within a few yards of the cottage, and there learnt that Mr. and Mrs. Romney had lived there only a few months; that they came out of Yorkshire but were gone to dine at a gentleman's house about three miles distant. The landlord then described the persons and manners of this couple, and fully convinced Camelford they were the people in the world he most wished to see. He went alone to the house, knocked at the door, but no one answered; he tried the latch, it was fast; he attempted the back door with better success; it opened at his touch; but there was no living creature visible, except two cats, and the dog he had brought with him. The parlour was furnished with a piano, two violins, a shelf filled with books, two guns, as many fishing-rods, and every apparatus for writing. Ca-

melford took advantage of the latter, wrote the epistle which has appeared in a former part of this volume; inclosed a twenty-pound bank-note, and placed it on the piano. This done, he returned to his companion, and they re-traced their way to Furness, intending to pay Romney another visit, ere long.

The day following Camelford went to Ulverstone, to deposit a letter in the post-office for his friend in America. As he was advancing to the letter-box, a lady in a travelling dress, her face shaded by a green veil, was approaching with the same intent, to whom he bowed and made way; but judge his astonishment, when, upon the fore finger of her right hand, he beheld the identical ring that his mother wore at the time of her unhappy death, and which was a family ornament, the gift of his father—he could not be mistaken, it was of peculiar beauty and workmanship; his parent had mentioned it as an unique, and very often regretted its loss.

He staggered back some paces, but ere he recovered from the shock and surprise, the lady was gone. He ran to the head inn, and saw her, accompanied by another female, drive off in a post chaise. What was to be done? To have a more exact view of the ring he was determined, and should it really be the same, to know how, and by what means the lady had it in possession. Eagerly inquiring where the chaise was gone, and being answered to Kendal, he hired a horse, bought a piece of black crape, to prevent his being known again, in case his conjectures were ill-founded, and galloped off.

Camelford overtook the chaise in an unfrequented part of the road, put on his disguise, and in a peremptory tone, ordered the postilion to stop. Then advancing, he said, ‘Ladies be not alarmed, you have nothing to fear, I only request to examine a ring on that lady’s finger; the application no doubt appears



strange, and from a person of my appearance alarming, but I once more repeat, you have no serious cause for apprehension. I have doubts, I have a curiosity, that must be satisfied at all hazards.' The lady, with a trembling hand, delivered the ring, which on a minute examination, proved beyond all contradiction to have been his late father's, and, alas! his mother's also! He pressed it to his lips, and was going to make the intended inquiry, when the parson and Romney seized hold of his bridle. The impulse of the moment made him clap spurs to his horse, he broke from their hold, and was out of sight in a moment.

Camelford had scarcely proceeded a mile, when sober reflection returned. 'To what purpose have I got possession of the ring, without the information attached to it?—have I not by my impetuosity tainted my character?—stigmatized my name by having it coupled with robbery?—Romney might have been trusted!—he shall be trusted! I'll return and make a full disclosure!'

During this mental soliloquy, Camelford's horse was quietly browsing on the cop; turning him round he found, to his extreme mortification, that the animal was unable to proceed, owing to a sudden lameness in one of the fore feet; dismounting to examine the cause, he could make no discovery, and with difficulty led her back to Ulverstone at a pace so slow, that had not Romney and the parson stopped to get refreshment, they must inevitably have overtaken him.

Camelford proceeded towards the cave, musing and melancholy. Possession of the ring had thrown him into a train of thinking that nearly bordered on distraction. The virtues and sufferings of his father rose with added poignancy to his remembrance; whilst the infamy and miserable death of his mother

and her paramour, filled his mind with anguish more acute, than even at its first perpetration. Fanny anxiously inquired into the cause of his more than usual gloom, when he related to his friends the whole of his singular adventure. Each animadverted upon it, but could draw no satisfactory conclusion, though they all agreed in blaming his precipitancy.

In his walks next day, which the melancholy tone of his mind induced him to take alone, he beheld at a distance two sportsmen, whom he easily recognized for Romney and his companion, and in the close of the evening, when they approached the abbey, rescued the former as before related, and gave into his possession the ring, as a more probable place of safety than any his own desultory life afforded, where frequent change of habit and abode endangered its preservation.

The latter end of the following year, Camelford received a letter from his American correspondent, dated Bristol; at which place he had just arrived, and wished to see him.

Leaving Fanny to the care of his companions, in the cave of Ben Lomond, he joined his friends at Bristol, who with heartfelt pleasure told him, he was no longer under restraint, that America would soon receive him, as one of her favourite sons, that Fanny's father was dead, and had left her considerable property, and that he hoped they would make it convenient to return with him.

It so happened, that the day before Camelford's arrival at Bristol, a French marquis left the Bush, on his return to the continent, and their persons so strongly resembled each other, that Camelford had been greeted by the title, on his first appearance, and not having made his name public, was so designated all over the house, even after they discovered their

error. This circumstance, and a wish still farther to puzzle me, was the cause of the address given to me at Worcester, and fully answered the perplexing purpose.

On Camelford's return to Scotland, he went to Newby Bridge, both from a wish to serve us, and to recover his ring; but learnt with surprize, that we had chosen a theatrical life, and were, they believed, at that time in one of the midland counties. Disappointed, but determined to see me ere he left the kingdom, he made the best of his way to Ben Lomond, and agreeably surprized his Fanny, and friends, by the shortness of his absence.

After the communication of every particular relative to America, and congratulations on his emancipation from danger, Thompson and Lillo were delighted with the prospect of re-crossing the Atlantic, but the others drooped and saddened, when a separation was talked of: they seemed to have lost all memory of their former life, ere Camelford joined them, and fancied existence could scarcely be supported without him.

‘My friends,’ replied Camelford, ‘my feelings are no less acute than yours on this occasion, and my heart would be heavy indeed, but for its hopes that you will share our destiny; you have no local attachments in this country, our joint stock amounts to nearly 2000*l*. Fanny and myself shall be amply provided for, Thompson and Lillo have both respectable connexions, and that sum, with your habits and dispositions, will enable you to take a farm in our vicinity, and live in comfort. I think you have some faith in my word, which I here pledge, that whatever happens, whilst I have the means, you my friends, my associates, my beloved companions, shall never want.’

Joy and gratitude pervaded every bosom, despair gave way to hope.

‘ Hope, which springs eternal in the human breast,’

painted scenes of independence, and rustic felicity, in a country blessed with every necessary requisite for the attainment of rational and domestic comfort. Little time was spent in preparation; Camelford, Fanny, Thompson and Lillo, set forward immediately, wishing to see as much of England as the time would permit, with a promise from their friends of a meeting in six months at Bristol.

To diversify the scene, they took their route through Northumberland, Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Cheshire; made a partial tour of Wales, and thence to Bristol; where a Worcester paper informed Camelford of Romney’s then residence.

Leaving Fanny at the inn, under the protection of her American friend, our trio took the road to Worcester, and arrived at the very crisis when my distresses were at their climax.

Their indefatigable endeavours to serve me, and final success, has been fully detailed in a former part of this work, we shall therefore leave Camelford for the present, and return to our own memoir.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.











